

STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS FOR 2015

HEARINGS BEFORE A SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS SECOND SESSION

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PART 4

WRITTEN TESTIMONY FROM OUTSIDE WITNESSES



Printed for the use of the Committee on Appropriations

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State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Subcommittee

Volume 4 Hearing

Written Testimony from Outside Witnesses

For FY15

Written Testimony of Rev. David Beckmann, President, Bread for the World

House Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

FY2015 International Affairs Budget

Thank you Chairwoman Granger, Ranking Member Lowey, and Members of the Committee for the opportunity to submit testimony. Bread for the World is a collective Christian voice urging our nation's decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad. Bread's network of individuals and churches includes about one million people, as well as nearly 50 church bodies. Through the support of our members around the country and partnership with faith groups and churches, we have worked for nearly 40 years to help ensure no person faces the burden of hunger. Bread's secular affiliate, the Alliance to End Hunger, engages diverse organizations – interfaith partners, secular charities, universities, and corporations – in building the political will we need to end hunger.

Madam Chairwoman, our humanitarian and poverty-focused development assistance (PFDA) programs in the State/Foreign Operations appropriations bill helps to build secure, healthy, and productive nations, and all for less than one percent of the federal budget. Moreover, the part of the foreign aid budget that is humanitarian and poverty-focused development assistance is nearly only six-tenths of that 1 percent. In noting the human security achieved and the hope infused throughout the world with these investments, I ask the committee for its continued bipartisan support of robust funding for programs ranging from agricultural development and nutrition, global health, education, gender equality, water and sanitation, and more. And, with ongoing crises in Syria, the Central African Republic, and South Sudan, the demand for U.S. food aid, medical assistance, and water and shelter continues to grow by the day

For these reasons, Bread for the World continues to mobilize the faith community at both the national and local levels in support of strong U.S. commitments to poverty-focused development assistance, including most recently through our efforts in co-leading the Interfaith Working Group on Foreign Assistance, a partnership comprised of nearly fifty Christian, Jewish, Muslim and other faith organizations. As a collective group, we are called by our faith to effectively advocate for programs within the 150 Account, particularly those affecting the world's poorest and most vulnerable populations.

Through these shared efforts, we have called for funding for nutrition in the global health account, especially during the first 1,000 days of a child's life, and we have expressed our support for food security and agriculture through Feed the Future and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. We have highlighted the importance of additional investments in the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and U.S. contributions to critical multilateral partners like the International Development Association which are yielding impressive results throughout the world, especially for children. According to UNICEF, compared to the year 2000, pneumonia will kill 625,000 fewer children this year; diarrhea will kill 663,000 fewer children; measles, 397,000 fewer children; malaria, 228,000 fewer children; and AIDS 107,000 fewer children.

In considering these gains, I ask the committee for its continued bipartisan support for humanitarian and poverty-focused development assistance accounts, which in fiscal year 2014, accounted for roughly \$24.1 billion, a funding level we support maintaining or preferably increasing in fiscal year 2015. In noting this strong funding level, I would like to thank this committee for its continued, bipartisan support of these programs, recognizing that such support is often difficult amidst larger economic realities and budget constraints. And though we certainly face extraordinary challenges here at home, the international affairs account, and

particularly poverty-focused programs are in our national interest. In addition to promoting a positive image of the U.S. around the world, poverty-focused programs are in our national security and economic interests, helping to build sustainable trading partners for the U.S. and supporting jobs here at home.

However, over the past few years, the international affairs budget has been cut by about 20 percent, and continues to be the target of additional reductions. Any further cuts would have a devastating impact, and would threaten many of the gains achieved as a result of U.S. investments in humanitarian and PFDA programs. Thus, Madam Chairwoman now is not the time to relax our focus. U.S. leadership in global health and development leverages other nations to act as well, and it is through this shared commitment that we experience even greater progress.

As you know, by robustly funding humanitarian and PFDA accounts, these programs provide long-term, sustainable solutions to the problems of poverty and hunger. Since 1990, there has been a 34 percent reduction in global hunger, and improvements in child nutrition have led to a 37 percent drop in stunting. But, despite this achievement, currently 1 in 4 children still are stunted worldwide and 80% of those live in just 14 countries. The effects of stunting and undernutrition are largely irreversible, and range from delayed physical and motor development, to impaired cognitive function, poor school performance, and lower earned income over the course of one's lifetime.

We know that empowering women is critical for optimal nutrition, particularly during the 1,000 days from pregnancy to a child's second birthday, as the consequences of poor nutrition during this short window has lasting ramifications throughout adulthood and is often passed on to the next generation. On a broader scale, under-nutrition costs billions of dollars in lost productivity annually, limiting GDP growth, and resulting in higher mortality and higher health

and education costs.

Conversely, by investing in nutrition, individuals and countries have increased economic opportunities, boosting a country's GDP by at least 2-3 percent annually. This is why U.S. investments in maternal and child nutrition are so critical and catalytic, both in development programs and through efforts to improve the nutritional quality of food aid in emergency situations. Research shows that for every dollar invested in nutrition generates as much as \$138 in better health by reducing the burden of diseases like malaria and HIV/AIDS, and through increased productivity. This is also why national leaders from 50 countries, including the United States, along with partners from civil society, are working to scale up nutrition and put it at the heart of development. For these reasons, we continue to support the Administration's efforts in developing a USAID and whole of government nutrition strategy, which will help to better coordinate and measure the effectiveness of U.S. nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions.

Bread for the World, along with a broad range of groups and individuals, also continue to work through the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network to support bipartisan reform efforts to our foreign assistance system that maximizes impact and helps reduce hunger, poverty, and suffering around the world. And, through our Offering of Letters campaign this year, we are calling for the enactment of smart, cost-saving measures to our food aid system that will result in millions more hungry and malnourished families being reached. One such example is to fully fund a Local and Regional Procurement (LRP) program, which was authorized by the recently passed farm bill at \$80 million. The practice of buying food aid on local and regional markets for distribution can be both quicker and more cost effective than traditional in-kind food aid. Two independent evaluations found that LRP programs have an average cost savings of at least 25

percent compared with similar in-kind food aid programs. In some cases, these savings can increase to over 50 percent, as a Cornell University study documented, along with a 62 percent gain in timeliness of delivery. The flexibility, cost effectiveness, and timeliness of such programs means that food aid can be delivered quicker and at less cost to taxpayers while supporting local markets and communities in developing countries. In difficult budget circumstances, when all programs must be justified, proposals to increase efficiency, save time and costs, and potentially reach more people should be strongly considered.

In closing, the United States has been an unprecedented spirit for good in the world, and thanks in part to this Subcommittee, and your support of humanitarian and PFDA programs through the years, we have responded to the needs of the poor, hungry, sick, displaced and abandoned. Our decision to act not only promotes our national security and economic interests, but ascends even higher. Whether motivated by spiritual beliefs, or a commitment to the common good, our actions are bringing forth greater hope to a world in need; a reality that acknowledges the dignity and worth of each person, and creates opportunities for all children to grow into healthy, productive adults capable of pursuing futures of promise and prosperity.

Bread for the World and many others in the faith community will continue to highlight the importance of these programs, and the impact these improvements are making in the lives of poor, marginalized, hungry, and suffering people throughout the world. Thank you for your efforts in ensuring these humanitarian and PFDA accounts remain well funded at levels equal or greater than those enacted in fiscal year 2014.

Thank you.

Written Statement of
Dr. Carolyn Y. Woo
President and CEO, Catholic Relief Services

**To the House Appropriations Subcommittee on
State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs**
April 4, 2014

Chairman Granger, Ranking Member Lowey, thank you for this opportunity to share with you Catholic Relief Services' (CRS) perspective on the United States government's international assistance. Based on our work in more than 90 countries, and seeking to fulfill Pope Francis' vision of a "Church by the poor for the poor," we share with you our recommended priorities for fiscal year 2015. Having traveled much in the past year, I remain distraught by significant needs across the globe, among refugees, illiterate children, and communities struggling for security. The good news is that together, with the local partnerships and technical expertise of NGOs, U.S. government funding and coordination with other governments, and partnership with foundations and corporations, we can and do make a profound difference. To continue U.S. leadership, CRS, in partnership with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), requests that the subcommittee give special attention to 1) funding humanitarian assistance and the global health subaccounts listed below at least at the levels provided in fiscal year 2014; 2) supporting increases in peacekeeping as requested by the Administration, including the proposed Peacekeeping Response Mechanism; and 3) working with Health and Human Services to develop a coordinated strategy and adequate funding to respond to the approximately 60,000 unaccompanied children predicted to arrive from Central America this year and also to address root causes for their forced migration. The full set of CRS/USCCB recommendations follows.

Account Title (\$ in thousands; includes OCO)	Agency	President's Request	CRS/USCCB Rcmdtn's
Maternal Health and Child Survival	USAID	695,000	705,000
Nutrition	USAID	101,000	115,000
Vulnerable Children	USAID	14,500	22,000
HIV/AIDs	USAID	330,000	330,000
Malaria, Tuberculosis, & Other Infectious Diseases	USAID	1,001,500	1,073,500
HIV/AIDs	DOS	5,370,000	5,670,000
Development Assistance	USAID	2,619,984	2,700,000
International Disaster Assistance	USAID	1,300,000	1,801,000
Migration and Refugee Assistance	DOS	1,749,355	3,055,000
Emergency Refugee & Migration Assistance	DOS	50,000	250,000
Millennium Challenge Account	MCC	1,000,000	1,000,000
International Development Association	World Bank	1,290,000	1,290,000
Contributions to International Peacekeeping	DOS	2,518,565	2,518,565
Peacekeeping Operations	DOS	336,150	336,150
Peacekeeping Response Mechanism	DOS	150,000	150,000
Conflict & Stabilization Operations	DOS	43,900	43,900
TOTAL		19,825,320	19,327,328
			21,060,715

We respectfully request that you fund humanitarian accounts to at least FY 2014 levels. Humanitarian needs across the globe are staggering. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs put forth its largest appeal ever in December: \$13.5 billion; \$6.5 billion for the Syria conflict alone. The President's \$1.1 billion request for Syria demonstrates leadership and recognizes the potential destabilization of the entire region if the spillover is not managed.

We urge the US government to lead other donor governments in developing and funding a coordinated, long-term humanitarian and development strategy for the Syria conflict, including a contingency plan and a plan for the resettlement of refugees. In addition to much needed humanitarian assistance, bilateral and development assistance will help neighboring countries to keep their borders open. While Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Egypt, and other countries have been extremely generous and hospitable to their Syrian neighbors fleeing the conflict, these societies are under extreme strain from the added burden of serving refugees, most of whom are not in camps, but are living amidst the local population. Even when the conflict ends, the humanitarian need will be serious for years. The United States must support local institutions in refugee hosting countries, such as the schools and hospitals, both public and private, which have expanded services to accommodate refugees from Syria. Each country situation is different, but the consistent theme is that schools and hospitals cannot handle both the local population and the continued influx of refugees. Integration of humanitarian and development funding can ensure that needs of both vulnerable host communities and refugees from Syria are met.

Beyond assistance, our government must continue to seek a political solution to the crisis. As the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has stated, "[T]he Syrian people urgently need a political solution that ends the fighting and creates a future for all Syrians, one that respects human rights and religious freedom." The Bishops continue to "ask the United States to work with other governments to obtain a ceasefire, initiate serious negotiations, provide impartial and neutral humanitarian assistance, and encourage building an inclusive society in Syria that protects the rights of all its citizens, including Christians and other minorities."

I turn now to two conflicts which receive much less attention, but in which the United States can make a critical difference: the Central African Republic (CAR) and South Sudan. The CAR is a failed state. Since the coup d'état in March of 2013, foreign fighters interested in its resources have poured in from neighboring countries. The Catholic Church is one of few functioning institutions. This is a critical time to support the transitional government and ensure free and fair elections when the country is ready.

For the security of its people and to prevent spillover, CAR needs immediate and urgent attention, including humanitarian assistance; a peacekeeping force; and a long-term strategy to address the violence and insecurity. More than half of CAR's 4.5 million people are in need of assistance. Bangui recently experienced a surge in internally displaced persons (IDPs), highlighting the fragile nature of the situation.

Though violence has escalated since December, the country is not beyond reconciliation. Programs to build social cohesion and prevent killing can work. There are cases of religious leaders successfully exhorting their followers not to kill. Communities which have not been

penetrated by either force have largely continued to co-exist peacefully. In CAR since 2007, CRS has collaborated with local partners to develop an early warning system to prevent violence. With U.S. government funding, the program has been expanded to facilitate social cohesion and early warnings regarding the movement of anti-Seleka and anti-Balaka forces. It could be further scaled up to enable more communities to secure themselves. International peacekeeping forces are also critical to prevent an escalation in the crisis. CRS supports the Administration's proposed Peacekeeping Response Mechanism for \$150 million; it would be an important contribution to a force expected to cost the United States \$250 million.

There are 625,000 IDPs in CAR. Since the coup d'état, the Archdiocese of Bossangoa has hosted up to 40,000 people at its compound. CRS supports the Archdiocese with shelter, food, and non-food items. With private funds, CRS provided food vouchers in Lobaye prefecture in order to stimulate the fragile economy. Yet food and shelter needs are likely to increase. As the rainy season begins this month, many families do not think it secure enough to plant. Those families who are returning to their communities often have no roofs over their heads; through OFDA funding, CRS will distribute shelter kits to returning families. Still, more funding is urgently needed. And, it needs to get to CRS and other implementers much more quickly.

The U.S. government should work closely with other countries to develop a long-term strategy to promote peace and rebuild state institutions in CAR. Current funding has only been made available for 12 months and should be extended as a sign of ongoing US support. Livelihood assistance and programs to foster justice and reconciliation will be critical to establish a lasting peace. The U.S. government should support the creation of a regional strategy to ensure that civilians are able to return home. Muslims and Christians have lived side-by-side peacefully for decades in CAR; unless justice is rendered and social cohesion and trust restored, many Muslims who have fled will not feel safe to return.

Just east of CAR, the world's newest nation South Sudan sank into violence and political turmoil in December. Since then, over 1 million people have fled their homes: 803,000 within South Sudan and 255,000 to neighboring countries. Currently, 4.9 million need assistance. The rains have already started in some parts of the country and will eventually make some of the most vulnerable populations unreachable. Many already have lost their farms and livelihoods to the conflict.

CRS currently reaches more than 12,000 IDP households across South Sudan. We provide shelter, hygiene, and household assistance to 4,000 vulnerable IDP households in Aweril county, and are working with OFDA to meet humanitarian needs in Jonglei state. Last year CRS testified before this subcommittee that the flexibility afforded by the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) in Mali in 2012 was critical to our rapid response there; that same flexibility is needed in South Sudan, so that money already in country can be used for immediate needs.

In addition to ongoing humanitarian assistance, we strongly urge the U.S. government to develop a country strategy for both the immediate situation and the medium term. Peacebuilding and reconciliation must be at the heart of the US government strategy moving forward so that South Sudan has a real chance for peace. For any strategy of reconciliation to be successful, the U.S. government should work to fill the current leadership gap.

Peacebuilding is hard work. It does not progress on a linear trajectory. Gains achieved are fragile and often disrupted by natural disasters, internal power struggles, corruption or external provocations. Success takes decades and progress can be confounded by new challenges. But it is time and money very well spent. It can mean that children stay in school and that fathers remain with their families. It can mean a government continues to function, even at a basic level. Those who benefit from U.S. assistance will never forget who stood with them in their time of need.

The U.S. government also has an opportunity to facilitate a peaceful transition in Burma through humanitarian funding. We urge the U.S. government to take a comprehensive regional approach to the humanitarian and protection needs of displaced people from Burma. While some positive change has occurred in Burma, protection and humanitarian assistance is still critical for refugees from Burma in neighboring host countries, and for IDPs within Burma. We also urge you to support efforts that address the root causes of conflict between local, state, and national governments with the ethnic nationalities and democratic activists.

As the Ukraine understandably grabs headlines, Burma shows signs of change, and Syrians continue to suffer, Central African Republic and South Sudan have fallen into largely unnoticed chaos. The needs in these countries and those surrounding them are likely to increase. Given these conflicts and protracted situations and the likelihood that the world will see a major natural disaster in fiscal year 2015, CRS urges the subcommittee to at least maintain funding for humanitarian accounts this year and to meet the President's request for peacekeeping.

Second, we urge you to maintain funding for global health programs that protect women, men and children and prevent the spread of diseases. The United States has made an important contribution to the eradication of disease, and we must continue that fight. Just this week, the world's most populous region – Southeast Asia, home to nearly 2 billion people – was certified polio-free. Eighty percent of the world's population now lives in polio-free regions, and our nation has played a major role in that accomplishment. The United States has been at the forefront of the polio epidemic for over 25 years as the largest donor to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. This long-term investment is paying off: today polio is endemic in just three countries, and we're close to reaching the global goal to eradicate the disease by 2018. CRS is proud to be a part of this effort through the USAID-funded CORE Group Polio Project, and we look forward to continued U.S. support to eliminate this crippling disease.

In the last decade, CRS has been one of the largest implementers of PEPFAR programming. AIDSRelief, our PEPFAR-supported antiretroviral treatment program, provided HIV care and treatment to more than 713,000 people through 276 health facilities in ten countries. In 2012 and 2013, our local partners in those countries assumed management responsibility for the programs and are now at the forefront of the country-owned response. This achievement was made possible through the deep commitment of the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator, the U.S. Congress and the Administration to fight HIV/AIDS. Together, we have made great strides.

The United States supports a vast array of other health programs that save millions of lives. Vitamin A supplements help babies to build healthy immune systems that fight common childhood illnesses such as measles and diarrhea. We fight early childhood malnutrition, which is associated with more than one-third of all childhood deaths. Thanks to U.S. support of the

Global Fund, CRS has distributed more than ten million bed nets to greatly mitigate the risk posed by mosquitos carrying malaria.

Non-governmental organizations like CRS maximize the impact of U.S. funding, capitalizing on our relationships with faith-based health networks and facilities, which are often located in remote areas where government services may not reach. CRS and other NGOs use our vast local, national and international partnerships to strengthen health systems. We also guide the smooth transition of activities to local partners, ensuring sustainable impact. From this perspective, we respectfully urge you to maintain current funding levels. Now is not the time to cut back: we are on the cusp of eliminating pediatric HIV, eradicating polio, and helping more and more children to reach their fifth birthday. This is America at its best.

Third, please ensure an adequate response to the anticipated exponential increase in the arrival of unaccompanied children. In recent years, the number of unaccompanied children fleeing to the United States from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico has increased exponentially. In FY 2013, more than 24,000 children came to the United States and were put under the protection of the Office of Refugee Resettlement. This year, the number of unaccompanied alien children is expected to reach 60,000. These children flee violence in their communities in search of safety and better economic and educational opportunities elsewhere. Some migrate to reunite with parents already in the United States.

As you know, that journey north is fraught with danger; traffickers and kidnappers lurk to profit from these vulnerable children. As a major refugee resettlement agency with child welfare expertise, the USCCB has recommended to the Department of Health and Human Services to improve the protection of these children when they arrive. I echo these requests. On the international side, I join the USCCB in urging you to address the root causes of this increased forced migration and have submitted language to that end. I also echo their call that the U.S. government work to build the capacity of the Mexican child welfare and refugee protection system to adequately protect migrating youth; to provide U.S. resettlement for children, when appropriate; and to work with Central American governments to employ systems that provide alternatives to migration and also ones that protect returning children so that they may come home in safety and dignity.

Conclusion

CRS came into a profound recognition of the need for peacebuilding in the 1990s when internal conflicts erupted in Rwanda, Sudan, Bosnia and other countries where we served. We could not fulfill our mission to serve the poorest and most vulnerable if we ignored the dynamics and causes of exclusion, division and conflict. Now as the United States reflects upon the atrocity of Rwanda 20 years later, we ask ourselves what more we can do to prevent this from ever happening again. We remember those who died in Rwanda as we help those affected by violence in Syria, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Afghanistan, and Central America, to name a few. We at CRS do this work because we are committed to the mission of helping all those in need, inspired by the Gospel. We see in collections from Dioceses across the country that Americans support assistance to our brothers and sisters; that generosity is who we are not only as people of faith, but also as Americans. CRS deeply appreciates our partnership with the U.S. government in this work, and we thank you for your leadership.

Written Testimony by Peter Yeo
Executive Director, Better World Campaign
Written Testimony: Support for the United Nations/Global Health Funding
Friday, April 4, 2014

Chairwoman Granger, Ranking Member Lowey, Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of a robust FY 2015 State/Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. The accounts funded by this legislation support U.S. dues assessments for the United Nations Regular Budget, United Nations Peacekeeping Budget, and a number of other critical UN activities as well as bilateral and multilateral global health interventions. In addition to these core accounts, we also support the new Peacekeeping Response Mechanism (PKRM) in OCO, which would act as a source of funding for urgent and unanticipated requirements of new peacekeeping missions. We specifically request \$2.625 billion for CIPA, \$501.65 million for PKO, \$250 million for the PKRM, and \$1.517 billion for CIO in FY'15. We also support the inclusion of language that enables us to pay our contributions to UN peacekeeping operations at the full assessed rate, as well as language allowing the U.S. to restore funding for UNESCO. Finally, we would also like to request robust funding for a number of key Global Health accounts, including \$1 billion for Family Planning/Reproductive Health, \$200 million for the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), \$59 million for polio eradication efforts through USAID, \$1.35 billion for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, with the ability to expand U.S. contributions to \$1.65 billion if other donor funds are leveraged, and \$674 million in contributions for the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI).

The Importance of Funding for UN Peacekeeping—CIPA & PKRM

The U.S. is currently working to respond to civil strife and security threats on a number of fronts, from sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East to Ukraine. While it is an imperfect instrument and not suited to all countries or contexts, UN peacekeeping plays a critical role in helping to stabilize countries that have been torn apart by conflict, protect civilians under threat of violence, and facilitate the establishment of stable and democratic governing processes and institutions that reduce the potential for future strife.

There are currently nearly 120,000 UN peacekeepers deployed on 15 missions around the world. This includes the UN mission in Mali (MINUSMA), which is working to secure population centers in the north of the country that, up until early last year, were under the control of several radical Islamist groups, including an affiliate of al-Qaeda. UN peacekeepers are also working to respond to recent violence in South Sudan, providing protection to tens of thousands of civilians who have sought shelter at UN bases. Both of these peacekeeping operations are squarely in our national interests, reflect America's longstanding commitment to global stability and human rights, and would not have been possible without strong U.S. backing on the Security Council.

In FY 2015, we are requesting \$2.625 billion for the State Department's Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities (CIPA) account. While this request is higher than funding levels in the FY'14 Omnibus, this is because our nation's peacekeeping dues did not receive sufficient funding in FY'14. Specifically, MINUSMA was not included in the Administration's FY'14 budget request, and it did not receive funding in the Omnibus. Congress also declined to

address arrears from the peacekeeping cap, which it did not lift for either FY'13 or FY'14. This, combined with increased needs in several peacekeeping operations—including the South Sudan mission—left a shortfall of more than \$350 million for UN peacekeeping in FY'14.

We are pleased that the Administration's FY'15 CIPA request represents a significant increase over this year's Omnibus and helps reduce the amount the U.S. is in arrears. Nevertheless, it does not address all current shortfalls, and consequently, BWC's recommendation is higher than the President's request. This level of funding will help ensure that critical peacekeeping missions, such as those operating in Mali and South Sudan, receive the resources necessary to carry out their mandates. In addition to providing full funding, Congress must also lift the peacekeeping cap to 28.36% to allow the U.S. to pay its peacekeeping dues at the full assessed rate. Failing to do so would only push the U.S. deeper into arrears and deny reimbursement to countries like Bangladesh, Ghana, Nigeria, and Jordan, who provide the bulk of the troops and police who serve on UN peacekeeping operations.

We would also like to express support for a Peacekeeping Response Mechanism (PKRM) in OCO to fund urgent and unexpected requirements associated with new peacekeeping missions. Among other things, this funding could be used to support the deployment of a UN-led mission in the Central African Republic (CAR), which could be authorized by the Security Council soon. While the Administration is requesting \$150 million for PKRM, the cost of a CAR mission is likely to match that of MINUSMA last year, which amounted to \$250 million.

The lack of funding for MINUSMA in FY'14 demonstrates the wisdom of creating a source of flexible peacekeeping funding. Clearly, crises requiring new or expanded peacekeeping operations can arise at any time, without regard to normal budgetary processes. As a result, the PKRM could be an effective way to deal with the challenges created by unanticipated new peacekeeping needs. It is important to note that allocation of PKRM funding would be subject to a determination that extra funding is needed, and, in the case of CAR or any other UN-led endeavor, a vote in the Security Council actually authorizing a mission.

We understand that budgets are tight and deciding where and how to allocate scarce resources presents an unenviable dilemma. However, we firmly believe that UN peacekeeping is more than worth the investment. This year, the world is observing the 20th anniversary of the Rwanda Genocide, a tragedy that the international community manifestly failed to adequately respond to. Today, we face new threats of mass atrocities against civilians in South Sudan, where pro- and anti-government forces are engaged in interethnic fighting, and CAR, where Christian and Muslim communities have been ripped apart by vicious inter-communal violence. While peacekeeping is not a panacea, it can play an extremely valuable role in efforts to stabilize countries wracked by conflict and protect vulnerable populations. For example, a recent study found that deploying large numbers of appropriately tasked and adequately resourced UN peacekeepers "significantly decreases violence against civilians." To support their hypothesis, the authors examined monthly civilian death tolls from intrastate armed conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa between 1991 and 2008. Their findings were striking: where no peacekeeping troops were deployed, the monthly average of civilian deaths was approximately 106. However, where at least 8,000 UN troops were present, the average fell to less than two.

In addition to their overall effectiveness in protecting civilians, UN peacekeeping missions also represent a penny-wise investment of U.S. resources. Indeed, a GAO study found that peacekeeping missions are eight times cheaper than the U.S. acting alone. If the U.S. fails to adequately support UN peacekeeping missions currently in the field, more resources could be needed at a later date when things go wrong in these places, making current peacekeeping expenses an additional bargain for American taxpayers in the long-run.

As a permanent, veto-wielding member of the Security Council, the U.S. has final say over the composition, mandate, and duration of all UN peacekeeping missions. Given this crucial leadership role, it is important that we pay our peacekeeping dues on-time, in-full, and without onerous preconditions. It is therefore our hope that members of the Subcommittee will support funding necessary to fully pay our FY'15 peacekeeping requirements and this year's shortfalls.

Funding for the PKO Account

We also request \$501.65 million for the State Department's Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) account in FY'15. PKO supports several regional peacekeeping missions, including voluntary funding for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). In recent years, Congress has also used PKO to fund assessed contributions for the UN Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA), which provides critical equipment and logistical support to the mission. AMISOM has made significant military gains against the terrorist group al-Shabaab recently, driving it out of Mogadishu in 2011 and its last urban outpost in southern Somalia in 2012. Nevertheless, the security situation in Somalia remains extremely volatile, and the Security Council voted last year to increase AMISOM's troop strength after a bloody attack on a shopping mall in Nairobi raised fears about a resurgent al-Shabaab. This makes a strong and well-resourced AMISOM and UNSOA all the more critical. Therefore, our request for PKO includes \$165.5 million requested by the Administration in CIPA to pay our UNSOA dues.

Funding for the UN Regular Budget and UNESCO

With regards to other core aspects of the U.S.-UN relationship, we also request full funding for the State Department's Contributions to International Organizations (CIO) account, which includes U.S. dues payments to the UN regular budget, at the level of \$1.517 billion included in the President's FY'14 request (with \$620 million specifically for the regular budget). The UN Regular Budget supports a number of the body's core functions, and serves as a particularly effective example of the strategic and financial value of U.S. engagement with the UN, as other UN Member States pay nearly 80 percent of costs. The regular budget finances, among other things, UN political missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, Central African Republic, and Israel that are directly in our national interests and working to promote stability in key regions of the world. It also funds a variety of other important multilateral initiatives, including monitoring mechanisms for Security Council sanctions against rogue states like Iran and North Korea, and efforts to coordinate electoral assistance to emerging democracies. In order to continue reaping the benefits of these diverse UN programs we must stay current on our regular budget dues.

We would also like to request support for restoring U.S. funding to the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) under the CIO account. This past autumn, following two consecutive years of not paying our dues, the U.S. lost its vote in UNESCO. Some of UNESCO's largest programs are in the Horn of Africa and Middle East promoting education,

free speech, and freedom of the press. The loss of our voice at UNESCO significantly dilutes our influence and weakens programs that are directly in our national interest. We therefore request that Congress provide the State Department with authority to waive the cut-off of U.S. funding to UNESCO so that the U.S. can pay its dues and regain its seat at the table. We also support the Administration's request for conditional authority to transfer up to \$160 million to CIO to pay our UNESCO dues should a waiver be passed by Congress, and for \$880,000 in the International Organizations and Programs account for UNESCO's World Heritage Program.

Expanding Access to Global Childhood Immunizations

Vaccines are one of the most cost-effective ways to save the lives of children, improve health and ensure long-term prosperity in developing countries. Immunizations have saved the lives of more children than any other medical intervention in the last 50 years. With partners like GAVI, UNICEF and others, the U.S. government is working to meet their primary goal of ending preventable childhood death by eradicating polio, decreasing global measles mortality, and strengthening immunization systems globally. As a result of U.S. leadership, vaccines currently save approximately 2.5 million children every year.

Since 2000, GAVI's work has immunized over 370 million children, saved 5.5 million lives, and prevented millions of cases of disease. However, due to high demand and uptake and approval of urgent new vaccine programs, increased funding to GAVI is needed to meet the needs following the 2011 replenishment. We request \$200 million in funding for GAVI for FY 2015. This funding level will both help close the current funding gap and serve as a bridge to lay the groundwork for the next replenishment cycle.

U.S. financial support for UNICEF helps it reach and save the world's most vulnerable children. For more than 50 years, UNICEF has been a world leader in immunizations, partnering closely with the US government and others. In 2012, UNICEF supplied 1.9 billion vaccines to 96 countries. The FY 2015 President's Budget Request includes a cut to UNICEF funding. We request that Congress restore funding for UNICEF to \$132 million in FY 2015, to allow UNICEF to continue its valuable life-saving work.

As a result of GPEI, polio infection has dropped 99%, and the world is nearly polio free; with only three endemic countries remaining. However, as recent outbreaks in previously polio-free countries have shown us, until polio is completely eradicated it remains a threat to children everywhere. Continued support from the U.S. will maintain leadership, foster innovation, and ensure crucial aspects of polio eradication activities will not be jeopardized. The total funding request for polio eradication efforts for FY 2015 will meet the estimated U.S. share of the funding gap for the current stage of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative's (GPEI) End Game Strategy: a strategic plan to completely eradicate polio by 2018. To continue eradication efforts we request \$59 million in funding for polio eradication efforts from USAID, in addition to a separate request through the Labor, Health and Human Services appropriations bill.

Ending Malaria Deaths

There are more than 200 million cases of malaria each year, killing over 600,000 people—mostly children under the age of five in sub-Saharan Africa. This means that a child dies of malaria every 60 seconds. Malaria is preventable and treatable; lives do not have to be lost to this

disease. Insecticide-treated bed nets are one of the most cost-effective tools to prevent and control the spread of malaria. When used properly, bed nets can prevent malaria transmission by up to 90 percent. Due in large part to U.S. leadership, significant progress has been made in the fight to end malaria. The World Health Organization estimates that increased prevention and control measures have led to a reduction in malaria mortality rates by 42% globally since 2000 and by 49% in Africa. The U.S. must sustain this momentum: decreases in funding for malaria research and development, prevention, control, diagnosis and treatment creates the risk of disease resurgence and increases in mortality.

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria has been a vital tool to protect, diagnose and treat people living in malaria endemic countries. The original multiyear commitment from the United States has been leveraged into millions of lives saved through the provision of 360 million bed nets and 260 million treated cases of malaria in the last decade. The Global Fund relies on the predictability of funding that comes from multiyear commitments to provide stability in resource provision to countries when and how they need it most. Currently, the Global Fund has assessed its financial need to provide critical resources to countries fighting AIDS, TB and malaria at \$15 billion over the years 2014-2016. During the latest Global Fund Replenishment, donors committed to almost \$13 billion bringing the estimated U.S. contribution, per the legislative cap allowance in PEPFAR, to \$1.35 billion. The Global Fund donors continue to seek additional resources to close the entire funding gap and at such time, as it becomes necessary, we ask that an additional \$300 million be appropriated to allow the Global Fund to continue leveraging the full U.S. contribution at \$2 for every \$1 provided by other donors.

Working hand in hand with PEPFAR and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and malaria, the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) continues to provide life-saving resources in the 19 focus countries as well as the Greater Mekong Subregion. Contributions to PMI have been used to holistically combat malaria through indoor residual spraying with insecticides, procurement and distribution of insecticide treated bed nets, intermittent drug preventive treatment for pregnant women and diagnosis and treatment of malaria with artemisinin-based combination therapies. In addition, PMI remains a leader in monitoring and evaluation, health systems strengthening and integration with other key public health efforts including vector-borne disease management as well as HIV/AIDS programs. As one of our flagship and most successful bilateral global health initiatives, we believe the Committee should continue their strong, bipartisan commitment to ending malaria deaths and should accept the President's request for funding PMI at \$674 million.

Saving Women's Lives

The lack of access to modern family planning is a key driver of the 75 million annual unintended pregnancies worldwide and the resulting yearly net increase of 83 million into the global population. Since 1995, U.S. financial assistance for family planning and reproductive health programs in the developing world has declined by more than 30 percent when adjusted for inflation. The number of women in these countries has grown by more than 300 million in the same time period. To meet the unmet need, the U.S. share of international reproductive health and family planning funding would be \$1 billion (including \$65 million for UNFPA). For UN Women, we request \$17.0 million, which more than doubles last year's budget request, but is the amount needed to keep the U.S. on UN Women's Executive Board.

**STATEMENT BY
DR. DAN E. DAVIDSON
PROFESSOR, BRYN MAWR COLLEGE
AND
PRESIDENT, AMERICAN COUNCILS FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION:
ACTR/ACCELS**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS,
AND RELATED PROGRAMS
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

APRIL 4, 2014

Madam Chairwoman, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to present this statement for the record on behalf of the American Councils for International Education. I am requesting that the Subcommittee recommend funding in the fiscal year 2015 State, Foreign Operations bill of at least \$577,900,000 for programs under the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and in support of continued assistance for East Europe and Eurasia, including several assistance models in the educational sector that are making a major difference for the successor generation of leaders in that part of the world. Further, I ask that funding with ECA for Citizen Exchange Programs be at least at the fiscal year 2014 level of \$98,787,000.

My name is Dan E. Davidson and I have worked in Russia, Eurasia, and East Europe as a scholar, teacher, and director of several major assistance initiatives for nearly 40 years. I am president of American Councils for International Education, a nonprofit organization that works in the republics of the former Soviet Union, East Europe, Afghanistan, Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Founded in 1974, American Councils is one of the leading and best-known U.S. organizations administering U.S. Government, World Bank, foreign government, and privately funded exchange and educational development programs.

ADVANCING MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES

Tensions across Eurasia and Eastern Europe are very high right now in the wake of Russia's annexation of Crimea and its military concentrations along the eastern Ukrainian frontier. Many official channels of communication with Russia, including NATO, G-8, as well as the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission Working Groups, and even NASA, have been suspended by the US as a result. Region-to-region and people-to-people connections, as a result, have acquired even greater importance than previously for the US, if our nation is to be able to maintain necessary levels of engagement with Russia.

Congress has played a vital role in defining our national goals for East Europe, Eurasia, and other nations and regions of strategic importance to the United States. It did so by enacting the FREEDOM Support (FSA) and the Support for East European Democracy (SEED) Acts and other creative programs that have done much to build relations of respect and trust with new

generations of citizens across this very large and strategic region. This Subcommittee, in particular, deserves credit for embracing these activities. In the early years of this century, unfortunately, the FSA and SEED Acts were seriously weakened in favor of a more generic, “one size fits all” approach to both the educational and research exchanges, as well as U.S. technical assistance programs. The results of these cutbacks are now keenly felt on many fronts.

I would particularly like to thank this Subcommittee for its continued support of the Department of State’s Title VIII, Research and Training for Eastern Europe and the Independent States of the Former Soviet Union Program. American Councils is among the administering organizations for this program. Title VIII is now more critical than ever to our national security interests, and yet, for the first time in 23 years, the State Department declined to implement this cost-effective program in 2013.

I recommend that the U.S. continue strengthening and re-focusing our exchange activities with the nations of the former Soviet Union and East Europe at the same time that it continues to hold some of the priorities and to replicate program models that have functioned well in Eurasia, especially in Central Asia, Afghanistan, South Asia, the Middle East, Northern Africa and other parts of the Muslim world.

The non-Fulbright side of State Department exchanges and assistance programs focuses on transparency, ethnic diversity, and access to educational opportunity, through a sustained and affirmative effort to reach beyond the traditional elites and residents of overseas capital cities. More importantly, these programs provide a significant long-term multiplier effect at relatively little cost as alumni networks in the home countries take on increasingly important roles in government, the private sector and the NGO community. They deliver professional development support to early career teachers and researchers in the US and overseas, and they provide vitally important immersion language training, internships, and field work support for US students and graduate students in a dozen languages and regions of the world that are deemed critical by the US government.

For that reason, Madam Chairwoman, I ask that the Subcommittee include language in support of the following exchange programs:

Future Leaders Exchange Program (FLEX)
American-Serbia and Montenegro Youth Leadership Exchange (A-SMYLE)
Youth Exchange and Study (YES)
Teachers of Critical Languages Program (TCLP)
Professional Fellowship Program (PFP)
Educational Advising Centers (Education USA)
National Security Language Initiative - Youth (NSLI-Y)
Critical Language Scholarships Program (CLS)
Intensive Summer Language Institutes (for US teachers of Chinese and Arabic)
Title VIII (Research and Training in East European/Eurasian Regions)
Educational Seminars (for teachers and principals)

FOREIGN OPERATIONS PROGRAMS

The U.S. currently supports a number of relatively new and unusually important assistance programs in the Eurasian/South East Europe region, which, based on my own experience, deserve particular consideration as models of focused U. S. assistance. Each contributes to meeting the challenges of preparing a new generation of citizens for the demands of the globalized economy and the concomitant needs for stronger workforce development, professional education, reduction of corruption, and greater social cohesion. They include the introduction of merit based testing for university admissions in Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Ukraine; support for the European Humanities University (EHU), the only contemporary university in the world currently operating in exile (in Lithuania) after its expulsion from Belarus by the Lukashenko regime, and the support of collaborative research and language training for US and Eurasian scholars under the State Department's highly respected Title VIII Program.

IN CONCLUSION

Madam Chairwoman, as you proceed with decisions on the fiscal year 2015 bill, I request that you continue to provide strong funding for the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and Foreign Assistance programs, particularly the programs mentioned in this statement. Also, I ask that you provide continued funding for the accounts for the states of Eurasia and Eastern Europe to insure adequate support under your bill for much needed programs in educational development and exchange.

Thank you very much for providing me with this opportunity to present my views to the Subcommittee.

Outside Witness Testimony for FY2015
Written Statement for the Record

Before the United States House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

March 31, 2014

Islom Shakhbandarov
Ahiska Turkish American Community Center (ATACC)
Founder and Member of the Board of Directors
Dayton, Ohio

INTRO: Madam Chairwoman, honorable Ranking Member, honorable members of the Subcommittee,

To summarize our request in FY2015 foreign aid:

Aid (USAID, economic development, etc.)	Russia: \$16 million in humanitarian, economic and technical assistance for the 80,000 Ahiska Turks in southern Russia	Ukraine (Crimea): \$3 million dollars in humanitarian, economic and technical assistance for the 15,000 Ahiska Turks in occupied Crimea	Georgia: 10% of all aid allocated to Georgia should be spent on the Ahiska Turks living there or to help repatriation of Ahiska Turks to their native lands there	Occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan: There should be no direct aid to the Armenia-occupied region of Azerbaijan. Hundreds of Ahiska Turks were ethnically cleansed and massacred by the Armenian forces in 1992.
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I am honored to testify before you today. On behalf of the entire Ahiska Turkish-American community, I would also like to thank the entire Committee for the important work it is doing, and express gratitude to the professional staff members. Similarly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people of the United States for welcoming my community, and allowing us to develop our economic, social, and intellectual potential – something that was denied to us for over a century in Russia.

Today, I testify and represent the entire Ahiska Turkish-American community. We urge the U.S. Congress to use its influence in directing the U.S. Department of State, such as in the Appropriations Committee Report, to re-establish Ahiska (Meskhetian) Turks, a distinct minority in Southern Russia, as a group of “special humanitarian concern” for Priority-Two (P-2) processing for refugee status, and to allow these persecuted, but hard-working people to relocate

to the United States and to repeat and build on the well-recognized and publicized success of the first group of Ahiska Turkish refugees who came under the P2 program in 2004-2006.

The Ahiska Turkish community is being actively, severely and blatantly persecuted as a distinct minority group in southern Russia, where they number some 80,000, at every level of socio-economic and political level. For this reason we would like to request \$16 million in humanitarian, economic and technical, including legal, assistance for the Ahiska Turks in southern Russia.

Similarly, we now hear about discrimination of approximately 15,000 Ahiska Turks in the Russia-occupied Crimea, as well as the stonewalling by the Republic of Georgia of its international and Council of Europe obligations to make no bureaucratic, administrative and legal barriers for the historic return of the Ahiska Turks back to their native land in Ahiska, region of present-day Republic of Georgia.

For this reason we would like to request \$3 million in assistance for the Ahiska Turks in the Crimea, a Russia-occupied region of Ukraine, and 10% of all non-military aid to the Republic of Georgia to be distributed among and for the needs of the Ahiska Turks, who are either living in Georgia, or are trying to repatriate. The U.S. Congress should, in fact, make all non-military aid to Georgia conditional on its treatment of Ahiska Turkish repatriants in that country, to make sure that international law and obligations of Georgia are followed and adhered by strictly.

At the same time, we would like to thank all the countries that have a long record of ethnic, racial and religious tolerance and treatment of its minorities, such as the Ahiska Turks, including Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine.

The Ahiska Turks (Meskhetian Turks), who were uprooted and resettled from their ancestral lands in Soviet Republic of Georgia by Stalin in 1944, have been perennial refugees since then, and unable to return to their native land. Much of the refugee community is now centered in Krasnodar region of South Russia, led by Governor Alexander Tkachev, a close friend of President Putin. Around 80,000 Ahiska Turks live in southern Russia, by experts' estimate, including 19,000 in Krasnodar region (which includes Sochi, the site for Winter Olympics in 2014, as well as Abinsk, Krymsk, Belorechensk, Novorossiysk and others), as well as thousands more in nearby Rostov region and Kabardino-Balkaria, and a total of 110,000 in all of Russia.

The discrimination and persecution of the Ahiska Turks by the Russian authorities as well as vigilante's and paramilitary forces of Cossacks has been documented by the U.S. State Department, the leading Russian human rights organization "Memorial", and the media, most recently The New York Times, Voice of America, even by RIA Novosti, German radio and television, Rbk Daily, *Sovershenno Sekretno* (Russian newspaper in Moscow), and other media.

In Krasnodar, scene of the 2014 Olympics, life has improved somewhat for the remaining Meskhetian Turks. Of the 5,425 Meskhetian Turks still remaining in this region, 5,331 were granted citizenship of the Russian Federation, removing the principle barrier to their integration into the region. However, those who remain are still subject to informal discrimination. For example, the governor of the region, Aleksandr Tkachyov defended his policies of discrimination

against the Turks in a 2010 interview on Russia's Channel One, claiming that he was not a chauvinist or nationalist but that the Turks had brought the fate on themselves by refusing to integrate and allegedly involving themselves in drug-trafficking and prostitution. In August 2013 the regional branch of the Kuban Cossack host threatened to purge the remaining Meskhetians.

Overall, the future for Meskhetian Turks in Putin's Russia looks grim as the regime resorts to ethnic nationalism as a legitimating ideology. Cossacks throughout the country are likely to be emboldened and in many regions have been co-opted by the authorities to police migration and unspecified "crimes". It is against this backdrop that one should understand the petitions to restart the settlement program.

Most recently, media reports indicate that the Ahiska Turkish community is again being actively and severely persecuted as a distinct minority group in Southern Russia at every socio-economic and political level because of their ethnicity and religion, and we are concerned that the P-2 status, initiated in 2003 for Ahiska Turks, has been interrupted.

As you may know, under the P-2 status, nearly 11,500 Ahiska Turks came to the United States between 2004 and 2006, settling in Ohio, Illinois, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Pennsylvania, New York, Oregon, Missouri, Kentucky, Texas, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Virginia, and many other states. This resilient community has been able to fully integrate into American society, and has proven itself to be a great asset in their new home states by becoming entrepreneurs and creating opportunities for others.

Unfortunately, issues of human rights and the ethnic persecution of Ahiska Turks in Russia remain serious concerns. An October 2013 report by the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance, which dedicates a section to Ahiska (Meskhetian) Turks, indicated the situation in Southern Russia remains "very bad" for ethnic minorities. The report also goes on to explain that human rights organizations' efforts to monitor and report on the situation have been met with "hostility by the authorities, including criminal investigations and prosecutions."

Given the current human rights situation in Russia, especially continued reports of rising discrimination and harassment against certain minority groups, we fear that the conditions will not likely improve in the near future. Therefore, we believe it is time to reinstitute P-2 status for the Ahiska Turks and continue to implement a successful refugee program that has not only improved the lives of refugees, but also enriched the communities they joined. We appreciate your prompt attention to our request and look forward to your reply regarding the restoration of P-2 status to Ahiska Turks.

We encourage the following steps to help end or at least minimize the unfair and inhuman conditions the Ahiska Turkish community has to put up with even now:

1) Help the U.S. State Department and Human Rights agencies to better document the regular violations of all rights of the Ahiska Turks in southern Russia and their human dignity. Better documentation and recording of violations would lead to greater pressure on the local Russian authorities to stop brutalities and at least reduce persecutions and discrimination;

2) Provide general assistance, through the U.S. Embassy and consulates in Russia, as well as NGOs, to Ahiska Turks, who want to register their or sell their homes or businesses, as well as register their children for day care, schools and universities, as well as medical care. Additionally, to help all Ahiska Turks to renew all of their government IDs and paperwork, which has often been destroyed by Cossacks, delayed, or refused on illegal grounds. For this end, U.S. Congress should allocate \$16 million for the needs of the Ahiska Turks in southern Russia;

3) Put pressure on the government of the Republic of Georgia, especially in relation to its Law No. "5261-RS" adopted on July 11, 2007, which places impossible preconditions on the repatriation of Ahiska Turks to their ancestral lands in southern Georgia. For this end, U.S. Congress should allocate 10% of all non-military aid to Georgia to be spent for the needs of the Ahiska Turks' repatriation;

4) U.S. government should request the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to re-initiate their study of the conditions of Ahiska Turks in southern Russia, and provide any and all necessary assistance;

5) to direct the U.S. State Department to designate Ahiska Turks as a group of "special humanitarian concern" for Priority Two, or P-2, processing, just like in the early 2000's. The P-2 category, which encompassed the Meskhetian Turks of Krasnodar Krai includes specific groups (within certain ethnic, religious or similar groups) identified by the Department of State. Applicants who appear to have suffered persecution or to have a well-founded fear of future persecution and who otherwise fall within the United States' resettlement priorities meet with a U.S. immigration official to determine whether they qualify for admission as refugees.

6) considering the invasion and occupation of Crimea, the human rights situation for the Ahiska Turks has been deteriorating under Russian military's occupation. The Ahiska Turkish-American community requests \$3 million for the humanitarian needs of the Ahiska Turks in the occupied Crimea.

CONCLUSION: These steps could help a long way to the thousands of productive and hard-working Ahiska Turks who are discriminated solely due to their ethnicity and religion in Russia and elsewhere in the former USSR, and will once again solidify the moral difference between the United States and Putin's Russia. Thank you.

Testimony of the Alliance for Global Food Security
Submitted to the House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Agencies
April 4, 2014

Witness: Ellen Levinson, Executive Director, Alliance for Global Food Security, 418 Fourth Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002. Phone: 1(202)879-0835; Fax: 1(202)618-6175

Subject: Funding for Global Food Security, Agriculture, Nutrition, and International Disaster Assistance Programs

Point of Contact: Ellen Levinson, 1(202)879-0835, elevinson@elevinson.com

Members of The Alliance for Global Food Security: The following private voluntary organizations (PVOs) are members of the Alliance for Global Food Security and they are actively engaged in humanitarian and development operations in over 100 countries worldwide: Adventist Development & Relief Agency International, ACDI/VOCA, Congressional Hunger Center, Feed the Children, Food for the Hungry, Joint Aid Management, International Relief & Development, OIC International, Planet Aid, PCI, Salesian Missions, and World Vision.

Madam Chairwoman, in the FY 2015 State, Foreign Operations, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, the Alliance for Global Food Security urges the Subcommittee--

- To maintain the same funding level for bilateral agriculture and food security programs in FY 2015 as was provided in FY 2014, \$1.1 billion.
- To increase funding for USAID Global Health nutrition programs from the \$115 million provided in FY 2014 to \$200 million in FY 2015, which will allow USAID to intensify efforts to improve the nutrition of women of reproductive age, as well as pregnant and lactating women, infants and young children.
- To maintain the same level of funding for International Disaster Assistance (IDA) in FY 2015 as was provided in FY 2014, \$1.8 billion of IDA funds (regular IDA and IDA/Overseas Contingency Operations funds combined).
- To assure that \$630 million of IDA funds will be available for the Emergency Food Security Program (EFSP), which uses local-regional procurement, cash transfers and food vouchers to address urgent food needs.

Cutting hunger and improving rural economies are basic building blocks for broad-based economic growth and stability in developing countries. Rather than merely surviving and struggling to meet basic needs, people begin to build for the future and countries become more engaged in the global economy. Supporting this transformation helps U.S. companies gain new export markets, stems the spread of terrorism, and demonstrates the humanitarian goodwill of the American people.

The Alliance is grateful that the Obama Administration has made food security a pivotal part of its foreign policy and global development agenda, as reflected in the Feed the Future initiative, the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, and recent efforts to develop USAID and government-wide global nutrition strategies. We thank Congress for supporting these initiatives through sustained investments in programs that improve people's health, nutrition and productivity, transform agricultural and food systems, and build self-reliance in food insecure developing countries.

Global food security has been embraced as a focal point for development by sovereign nations, inter-governmental organizations and a wide variety of nongovernmental organizations, academic and research institutions, and private enterprises. U.S. funds spent on these initiatives leverage contributions by other governments and nongovernmental donors, private companies and recipient country governments and organizations. Plus, there is great expertise among PVOs to mobilize communities to improve nutrition and to build the capacity of local agricultural producers, businesses and organizations so they can supply sufficient, safe and nutritious foods and make a living wage.

The goal of Feed the Future is to increase investments in agriculture in a way that improves the quantity, diversity and quality of foods produced and marketed and alleviates poverty by creating more sustainable incomes for farmers and businesses throughout the agricultural value chain. It is intended to be catalytic, based on principles of country ownership and engagement of the private sector and civil society, and focused on results. Many PVOs have expertise in engaging civil society and the private sector and applying market-based principles and innovative approaches to promote agriculture development, to link agricultural development to improved nutrition, and to promote sustainable systems in poor communities. USAID should assure that the funding mechanisms are designed to encourage applications from and programs implemented by such PVOs.

Fundamentally, Feed the Future is not a needs-based program, since the conditions must be conducive for substantial and fairly rapid progress in ramping up agricultural productivity and value chains. This contrasts with work in more marginal areas, where poverty is more entrenched, access to services and inputs very limited, and progress takes a longer time.

Thus, in our nation's global food security strategy, it is important to assure there is a balance – that in addition to the general Feed the Future agenda there are sufficient opportunities for programs that improve agriculture productivity and food systems, increase incomes and improve nutrition and resilience of poor communities. Such results are primarily seen under the PL 480 Title II development programs, which are an important component of our nation's global food security strategy.

In recent years, USAID has made available \$60-\$80 million of development assistance funds (called the "Community Development Fund") for use in Title II development programs conducted by PVOs and cooperatives in countries where food aid monetization is not used. We support continued access to those funds for PVOs and cooperatives for development activities and building the capacity of poor communities to meet their own needs and be more resilient when faced with adverse conditions, such as insufficient rainfall or floods.

The Alliance supports local and regional procurement of food aid and cash transfers for emergencies using IDA funds for the EFSP, while PL 480 Title II remains the core program for providing US commodities and processed foods for emergency and non-emergency needs. This allows USAID to have a variety of tools in the toolbox, while maintaining the structure and reliability provided by the Food for Peace Act.

USAID has not posted information about FY 2013 program expenditures for the EFSP, but we understand that approximately \$600 million of IDA funds were used for the EFSP in FY 2013, over half of which was for Syria and most of those funds were provided as cash transfers. We thank the Subcommittee for asking USAID to provide more detailed information about how the EFSP funds are spent, including the amount and cost of commodities provided through food vouchers and cash transfers for each emergency operation, the number of recipients and how long they received the benefits. Similar to PL 480 Title II, USAID should provide information about the types, quantities and costs of buying and delivering the commodities procured from local or regional markets for each LRP program, the number of beneficiaries, and the implementing agencies for each program.

We urge Congress to keep all the tools in the toolbox to fight hunger and build food security. We would welcome the opportunity to provide additional information and answer any questions you may have. Thank you very much for this opportunity to provide testimony to the Subcommittee.



The American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association

Written Testimony

FY15 Funding: Voice of America's Greek Service

Prepared for presentation to the U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Written Testimony for FY15 Funding

Submitted By:

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www.ahepa.org

April 4, 2014

Chairwoman Granger, Ranking Member Lowey, and distinguished members of the Committee, the members of the **American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA)**, the nation's leading organization of three million American citizens of Greek heritage, and Philhellenes, are requesting that funding in the amount of \$400,000 be restored to the FY15 budget for the **Broadcasting Board of Governors, International Broadcasting Operations (IBO)** program to continue the operation of Voice of America's Greek Service. **We strongly oppose the elimination of Voice of America's Greek Service that occurred in FY2014.**

Significance to the Eastern Mediterranean & U.S. Interests

The restoration of the VOA Greek Service is paramount to achieving peace and stability in the eastern Mediterranean, which is in the best interest of the United States. Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus all lay at the doorstep of two significant and active geopolitical spots in the world: the Balkans and the Middle East. Recent developments in the Ukraine and Syria, the resumption of reunification talks in Cyprus, as well as the discovery of energy finds in the eastern Mediterranean, add to the strategic importance Greece plays to the United States as a vital link of the eastern NATO flank. Therefore, it is in the United States' best interest that the region is politically, economically, and socially stable and democratic principles flourish. The VOA Greek Service works to ensure this is accomplished.

The void left by the absence of VOA's Greek Service in the eastern Mediterranean leaves troubling questions. How can we be confident America's policy

initiatives in the Balkans and the Middle East, and broader European region, are communicated effectively? The door will be opened to slanted and unreliable news reporting. Just like in the United States, where salacious stories about celebrities and infamous personalities tend to sell more newspapers than the “local man or woman makes good” feel-good story; what sells newspapers overseas are stories projecting America’s policy positions in a poor or dubious light. Voice of America, a respected and credible broadcast outlet because of its straight-forward reporting in a country’s native language, is needed in such a crucial region to ensure unbiased reporting will be conducted. Furthermore, as austerity measures required Greece’s state-owned media outlets to become eliminated, VOA’s Greek Service can fulfill a void with news programming.

For example, the Greek Service helped to foster rapprochement between Greece and Turkey, both important NATO allies. The Greek and Turkish VOA Services also have utilized television and radio to report on the Cyprus issue. For example, a VOA interview with a former Cypriot Ambassador to the United States was able to be broadcast to Turkey due to the fine-working relationship between the two desks. This is a bold initiative and one that we enthusiastically applauded at the time. In fact, AHEPA has explored the role the media can play to promote a solution to the island’s near 40-year-old division when it hosted a public forum featuring Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot journalists and experts in the field of conflict resolution in 2003.

1. Unfortunately, these types of collaborative efforts between the Greek and Turkish Services cannot occur in FY2014 due to the elimination of the Greek Service during a most critical time as Cyprus settlement talks have resumed in February 2014.

Undoubtedly, the Service fulfills the BBG’s mission “to inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy.” The BBG also maintains that it helps foster and sustain free, democratic societies by exemplifying free media and free expression. Here, again, the VOA Greek Service helps the BBG meet its mission and fulfill this objective. Collaborative efforts between the Greek and Turkish Services help to fill a void for two NATO allies that have seen the profession of journalism struggle within their own borders. In Greece, the Committee to Protect Journalists downgraded the Greek media’s status from “free” to “partly free.” The Southeast European Media Organization (SEEMO) issue a statement challenging punitive measures taken against Greek journalists that was largely ignored by Greek media outlets. The VOA Greek Service stepped in to fill the gap on this issue. Its reports were relayed by two large affiliates in Greece, Skai and Radio City International. Moreover, with regard to journalistic freedoms in Turkey, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, Turkey has imprisoned more journalists than any other country for the second straight year.¹ In addition, we are familiar with the recent block of social media outlets of Twitter and YouTube by the Turkish government. Therefore, having well-resourced VOA Greek and Turkish Services is critical.

The Greek Financial Crisis

¹ “Turkey Jailing the Most Journalists,” by Hannah C. Murphy, *New York Times*, Dec. 18, 2013 ([web site](#)).

It is important to note that VOA Greek Service was the first Greek broadcast to air a comprehensive report that detailed the 2012 agreement reached by the European Union to approve a \$171 billion loan to Greece. In fact, the director of *Radio City International*, a VOA affiliate, appreciated VOA Greek Service's reporting that allowed his station to become "the first" to broadcast the news in Thessaloniki to an audience—as you can imagine—on pins and needles awaiting to learn its fate. Moreover, VOA Greek Service was the first to air President Barack Obama's statement welcoming the agreement and its programming covered all aspects of the loan agreement, including U.S. media opinion pieces on Greece and the demonstrations of the Greek people against the enactment of the austerity measures. All of this important reporting aired on VOA Greek Service's TV and radio affiliates and posted on the Service's web site, YouTube, and social media feeds on Facebook and Twitter.

- 1 Prior to its elimination, the Greek Service extensively reported on AHEPA's humanitarian campaign for the people of Greece which raised more than \$400,000 to feed the needy and helped to secure \$3.25 million in medical supplies for depleted hospitals throughout Greece.

Importance to the American Hellenic Community: Extremism in Greece

We strongly contend that Voice of America is an important component for projecting our message—as American citizens of Greek heritage—abroad. Through Voice of America Greek Service, we have been able to demonstrate a strong bond between the American Hellenic community and audiences in the eastern Mediterranean which also benefits the United States and its interests in the region.

The rise of extremism in Greece is another compelling reason to restore funding for the VOA Greek Service, which again, addresses the BBG's mission "to connect people in support of freedom and democracy." On the ultra-right, Golden Dawn, a neo-Nazi party steeped in anti-Semitism and investigated for attacks against immigrants and political opponents, remains the third-most popular political party in Greece despite having six of its leaders in jail. On the far-left, previously unknown leftists Militant People's Revolutionary Forces recently claimed credit for the murders of two Golden Dawn members in Athens.

- 1 We strongly contend VOA Greek Service reporting of AHEPA's strong concern about the rise of extremism in Greece, and its condemnation of Golden Dawn's presence in the United States, helped the Greek government, its authorities and citizens, including journalists, take a stand against extremist elements.

Also, the strong, long-standing relationship, or historic bridge, between the United States and Greece is conveyed abroad through VOA's coverage which the American Hellenic community sincerely appreciates. For example, VOA Greek Service extensively covers the annual celebration of Greek Independence at the White House, at which President Barack Obama stated in 2011, *"...whether in good times or in bad times, the people of Greece will always have a friend and a partner in the United States of America...And let me commend Greece, our close NATO ally, for standing up for the security and opportunity of people around the world—from the Balkans to Afghanistan,*

where Greek service members are helping to give people who have know[n] too much war the chance to live in peace and security.”²

Finally, the American Hellenic community, AHEPA especially, relies heavily on the professionalism of Voice of America to report an accurate and balanced message to a global audience. Voice of America has reported on AHEPA's efforts to promote rapprochement and reconciliation in the eastern Mediterranean through AHEPA's meetings with Turkish government officials. This fact helps AHEPA in its effort to serve as a viable, effective conduit or “bridge-builder” between nations.

VOA Greek Service in Demand throughout Greece

Voice of America's reporting in Greece is valued by Greek media affiliates and is well-received by Greek audiences. Despite for a period of five years of being prohibited to travel due to budget constraints, when the opportunity presented itself at the end of FY2011 for the Greek Service Chief to travel to Greece's two major cities, Athens and Thessaloniki, a significant interest and need for the VOA Greek Service was revealed. For example, the Committee should take the following into consideration:

- 1 a major national network, *SKY TV*, would like to carry a 5 to 10 minute daily TV package from Washington containing American and Greek American news;
- 1 *SKY TV* also expressed interest to carry a 30-minute weekly wrap-up of developments in the United States;
- 1 *NET*, the most popular Greek state-owned TV system expressed interest to establish a regular TV program in cooperation with VOA Greek Service;
- 1 in Thessaloniki, the same interest was expressed by *XTV* and *EGNATIA TV*; and
- 1 in Patras, Greece's third largest city, *PATRAS TV* also expressed interest to carry a regular program in cooperation with VOA Greek Service.

These basic facts are a testament to the success of the quality of VOA's reporting and the importance of its substance to a Greek audience. We strongly disagree with any assertion that the VOA Greek Service is losing effectiveness or does not have the ratings. Unfortunately, the absence of a consistent, dependable annual budget for VOA Greek Service prevents the Service from capitalizing on this interest, expanding its service in Greece and from capturing any ratings data to prove that Greek audiences value its programming. However, when VOA Greek Service had such a diverse affiliate base in the past, its programming drew the following audiences³:

- 1 VOA in Greece received a 4.5% rating for broadcast via Alpha TV Network, which in a country of its size, is a substantial audience
 - o The broadcast rating in Athens was 5.2%.
- 1 VOA coverage over Radio Skai received a 2.9% rating.
- 1 Approximately one million people in Greece received VOA either via TV, Radio, or the Internet

² <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-honoring-greek-independence-day>

³ All ratings as reported by AGB Nielsen Nationwide People Meters Panel

Recommendation

In previous fiscal years, we applauded Congress, and this subcommittee, for fully restoring funding to the Voice of America's Greek Service. Therefore, for FY15 we respectfully request the Committee to restore funding Voice of America's Greek Service at \$400,000; a minuscule, yet significant investment to protect U.S. interests in the region.

1. We recommend the following report language be included: *"The bill provides funding to restore Voice of America broadcasts in Greek."*

We further request that Congress especially make an effort to ensure oversights that occurred with the Greek Service, such as what transpired with its elimination in FY2014, be avoided in the future.

Conclusion

The uncertainty of knowing whether or not the funding of the VOA Greek Service will be restored for the past several fiscal years has added to the burden of the service. The uncertainty makes it difficult to hire support staff, secure affiliates abroad, travel to cover significant events in the Greek American community throughout the nation (these events don't just occur in Washington), and conduct timely TV and radio ratings surveys. However despite all of these hurdles, the VOA Greek Service continues to provide an invaluable professional service on behalf of the citizens of the United States that is admirable and effective.

Simply stated, Voice of America's Greek Service offers a significant contribution to the national interests of the United States in the eastern Mediterranean. It is a dependable and valuable service; one that arguably projects the best of American journalistic qualities to a vital region in the world. Our nation's national security and public diplomacy efforts will be enhanced with the proper funding of the Greek Service. Moreover, the American Hellenic community would retain an essential communications vehicle through which we rely on to disseminate an accurate and balance message to crucial audiences abroad. Thank you for the opportunity to present our written testimony to the Committee. We are eager to work with Congress to restore funding for the VOA Greek Service.

Testimony of Nick Larigakis, President, American Hellenic Institute (AHI)
Fiscal Year 2015 Appropriations Bill
Submitted to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and
Related Programs – April 4, 2014

Chairwoman Granger, Ranking Member Lowey and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to submit testimony to the Subcommittee on behalf of the nationwide membership of the American Hellenic Institute on the administration's FY2015 foreign aid budget proposal.

In keeping with the best interests of the United States we oppose: (1) any military assistance the administration will request for Turkey until Turkey withdraws all of its troops and illegal Turkish settlers in Cyprus; (2) aid the administration will request for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM); and (3) any reduction that might be introduced in the aid levels for the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. United States foreign assistance will be helpful if appropriated toward the implementation of some of the Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) proposed by the Republic of Cyprus, for example, the Famagusta CBM package, which are vital to sustain and uphold the positive momentum created by the resumption of the peace negotiations on the island aimed at its reunification.

U. S. Interests in Southeast Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean. The U.S. has important interests in southeast Europe and the eastern Mediterranean. Greece is strategically situated in a vital region for U.S. interests. To the north of Greece are the Balkans, Eastern Europe and Russia, to the East is the Middle East, and to the South are North Africa and the Suez Canal. Significant commerce and energy sources pass through the region. However, the projection of U.S. interests there depends heavily on the region's stability. Therefore, the U.S. has a stake in fostering good relations between two NATO allies, Greece and Turkey, and in achieving a just and viable settlement to the Cyprus problem.

Greece is important for the projection of U.S. strategic interests in the region by virtue of its geographic location and by being home to the most important military facility in the Mediterranean Sea, U.S. NSA Souda Bay, located on Crete. Military installations located at Souda Bay in addition to NSA Souda Bay include the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) and the NATO Missile Firing Installation (NAMFI).

- Most recently, the two-week trilateral naval exercise "Noble Dina 2014" between the U.S., Greece, and Israel, held in March 2014 off of the coast of Crete, is a prime example of Greece's strategic importance to U.S. interests in the region.

In 2012, 118 Ships of the U.S. Navy and 102 NATO vessels visited Souda Bay. Also in 2012, 953 U.S. Air Force aircraft and 148 NATO aircraft landed on Crete. To illustrate Souda Bay's importance, during U.S. operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, tens of thousands of aircraft have used over-flight access including one two-year period where nearly 30,000 allied flights traversed Hellenic airspace. In the NATO buildup for Libya, Souda Bay spokesperson Paul Farley said of the 400 U.S. Marines deployed there that

they were “part of contingency planning to provide the president [Barack Obama] flexibility on full range of option regarding Libya” along with the amphibious assault ships USS Kearsarge and USS Ponce.¹

When then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton visited Athens, July 17, 2011, she said, “...I am pleased to be here during these challenging times to demonstrate unequivocally the strong support that the United States has for Greece. We know that we are your friend and we are your ally and we are proud to be both...As a NATO ally, we appreciate Greece’s partnership on a shared agenda that spans the globe...Our diplomatic and military efforts are gaining momentum, and we are grateful for Greece’s engagement and support, especially your willingness to host coalition military assets at Souda Bay and other sites close to Libya.” She also expressed appreciation for Greece’s support in speaking against an attack on the U.S. embassy in Syria and for Greece’s support on “democratic transitions” occurring throughout North Africa and Middle East.²

In addition, Greece is a top contributor to the defense efforts of NATO, spending an estimated 2.3% of its GDP on defense in accordance with NATO standards despite its dire economic condition. The United States, United Kingdom and Estonia are the only other NATO allies that meet this standard. Greece is also an active participant in peacekeeping and peace-building operations conducted by international organizations, including the UN, NATO, the EU, and OSCE. It should also be noted that Thessaloniki was NATO’s main sea and airport of debarkation during crises in the former Yugoslavia. Moreover, on March 25, 2011, President Obama re-affirmed Greece’s contributions as a NATO ally, including in support of NATO’s operations in Libya:

“And as we celebrate the independence of the Greek people, the United States and Greece are standing with our NATO allies to support the Libyan people as they stand up for their own freedom.”

Moreover, Greece has been deeply involved in Afghanistan by offering personnel for security and training purposes. Greece has also participated through donations of equipment, millions of euros, and transportation services. Hellenic forces have participated or are actively involved in peacekeeping operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan.

A key to peace and stability in Greece’s own region is for Greece and Turkey to have good relations with each other, promote democratic ideals and principles, and maintain growing economies. However, Turkey’s continuing occupation of Cyprus, its intransigence in solving the Cyprus problem, its refusal to recognize the Republic of Cyprus (a prerequisite to Turkey’s E.U. accession process), which is a member of the European Union; its bellicose threats against Cyprus and Israel, which, in collaboration with a U.S. energy company, are developing hydrocarbon reserves found within their exclusive economic zones (EEZs) threaten and prevent stability, and by extension, are detrimental to U.S. interests. Of course, Turkey’s ongoing human rights, freedom of speech, and religious freedom violations are problematic.

Furthermore, this instability continues to be exacerbated on a consistent basis by virtue of Turkey’s continuing violations of Greece’s territorial water and national airspace integrity in the Aegean. These actions cost the Greek government approximately \$400

¹ “U.S. troops arrive in Greece in Libya buildup,” *USA Today* as reported by the Associated Press, March 3, 2011.

² http://blogs.state.gov/index.php/site/entry/travel_diary_greek_foreign_minister_lambrinidi

million a year and come at a time when it can ill afford to be spending any amounts of money unnecessarily to deal with provocative actions by a fellow NATO ally.

Finally, throughout the past decade, Greece had added stability by helping the U.S. to bring economic development to this volatile region. Greece invested more \$22 billion in the countries of the region, which created more than 200,000 new jobs and contributed more than \$750 million in development aid.

In promoting a multilateral approach to diplomacy and foreign policy, the U.S. should look to Greece as an immensely valuable link in this region. With its centuries enduring presence, its close cultural, political and economic ties to the Mediterranean countries, including Israel; Western Europe, the Balkans, Eastern Europe and the Middle East, Greece is an ideal strategic partner for the U.S. in this region.

Turkey. We oppose any aid for Turkey and any other assistance programs from the United States. This includes most favored nation trade benefits including textile quotas and the transfer of any nuclear related assistance which we oppose as not in the best interests of the U.S. We contend such benefits should be conditioned on Turkey meeting the following conditions: (1) the immediate withdrawal of all Turkish troops from Cyprus; (2) the prompt return to Turkey of the over 180,000 illegal Turkish settlers in Cyprus; (3) the Turkish government's safeguarding the Ecumenical Patriarchate, its status, personnel and property, reopening the Halki Patriarchal School of Theology, and returning church properties illegally seized; and (4) stopping the violations against Greece's territorial integrity in the Aegean.

Cyprus. We strongly oppose any requests that would reduce the UN peacekeeping budget. The illegal occupation of the northern part of the Republic of Cyprus by Turkish troops is a reality. The Turkish-occupied area which amounts to 37.3% of the territory of Cyprus is one of the most heavily militarized areas in the world with the presence of more than 43,000 Turkish occupation troops. As long as the northern part of Cyprus remains under Turkish military occupation, a strong UN peacekeeping force should be maintained on the island.

In February, reunification talks resumed based upon a Joint Communiqué agreed to by Republic of Cyprus President Nicos Anastasiades and Turkish Cypriot leader Dervis Eroglu. A February 11, 2014 White House statement following the announcement stated:

"We encourage the sides to work expeditiously to resolve the outstanding core issues and achieve a settlement that reunifies Cyprus as a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation at the earliest possible time...The United States welcomes President Anastasiades' proposal for a package of bold and innovative confidence-building measures and other constructive proposals, which have the potential, when agreed and implemented by the parties, to dramatically enhance cooperation between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities and restore faith in settlement efforts."

Congress can assist Cyprus by agreeing to give funding toward the implementation of some of the Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) proposed by the Republic of Cyprus (as referenced in above White House Statement), which are vital to sustain and uphold the positive momentum created by the resumption of the peace negotiations on the island. An excellent example worth United States investment is the Famagusta package (handing over

of the fenced-off city of Famagusta to the UN to facilitate the technical work for the restoration of the city/use of the Famagusta port for Turkish Cypriot trade/measures that would facilitate Turkey's accession negotiations), which creates a win-win situation for all stakeholders and should be seen as a "game changer" that will build mutual trust, attract investments, and create jobs, which are essential elements of a successful outcome of the new process.

Congress can also assist in this effort by calling on Ankara not to manipulate the ongoing direct talks, but instead, actively and constructively support the talks not only through rhetoric but through concrete steps. The Cypriots themselves should have ownership of the process and the Cypriot people should arrive at a solution that is for the Cypriot people, having full regard to the parameters of a solution as set out in the Joint Statement of Feb 11, 2014, for a bizonal, bicomunal federation, as well as the full respect of the principles and laws of the European Union, of which Cyprus is, and will remain, a member. However, this does not absolve Turkey of its responsibility as the occupying power to play a constructive role in resolving the Cyprus issue.

In addition, the Congress should echo the statement of then Foreign Affairs Committee Ranking Member Ileana Ros-Lehtinen who called for the immediate removal of Turkey's troops from Cyprus following a December 7, 2010 meeting with Turkish Ambassador Namik Tan.

"As I told the Ambassador, I am deeply concerned about Turkey's position on the conflict in Cyprus, which has divided that country for almost four decades. Turkey must fully support a Cypriot solution to reunification of the island and immediately withdraw its troops from northern Cyprus."

This is a position Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen reiterated as the then chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee at an AHI event in February 2012 where she stated Turkey must "immediately and permanently withdraw its occupation force from Cyprus." Withdraw of Turkish troops from Cyprus would go a long way to solving the Cyprus problem because it would be a confidence-building measure that would create a more favorable environment.

Finally, AHI is also concerned, with the security of the energy prospects off the coast of Cyprus. We contend the United States should continue to support the exercise of the sovereign rights of the Republic of Cyprus to explore and develop the resources within its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) free of any third-party interference and to underscore the importance of avoiding any threats or other actions or statements that escalate tension.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). We strongly oppose any proposed ESF FY2015 aid to FYROM as long as it is not tied-in to FYROM's commitment to negotiate in good faith with Greece to find a solution to the continuing unresolved issue between Greece and FYROM over the name of the latter. Instead, we strongly support language included in Section 935 of H.R.2583 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, which passed the House Committee on Foreign Relations in the 112th Congress in July 2011. It stated:

Section 935. Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. This section expresses the sense of Congress that the provision of United States assistance to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia upon that

government's willingness to engage in meaningful discussions with the government of Greece to resolve the ongoing dispute over what shall be its official name. This section also prohibits the use of U.S. funding for any activities which support any incendiary rallies, rhetoric, or propaganda by either the FYROM government or private entities, including educational materials that promote inaccuracies regarding the history and geography of Greece and FYROM.

It is FYROM that is the intransigent party and not Greece. Greece is a major investor in FYROM and helps to sustain its precarious economy and reduce its large unemployment. If unresolved, this issue will contribute to potential instability within the Balkans.

FYROM's provocations against Greece are an affront to Greece and its citizens. Since August 2006, Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski has followed a long-term policy of extreme nationalism and provocation against Greece—*most often through infrastructure*—in conflict with European values. We have serious concerns that ESF funds (which are provided for a variety of economic purposes, like infrastructure and development projects) to FYROM will be utilized to build infrastructure aimed to continue to provoke Greece. Gruevski's actions are a breach of the U.N.-brokered Interim Accord and erode efforts to build trust and good neighborly relations. Unfortunately, the irresponsible decision by the Bush administration in November 2004 to recognize FYROM as the "Republic of Macedonia" has contributed greatly to FYROM's intransigent and provocative stand. It was a disrespectful act toward a staunch NATO ally in the Balkans, Greece.

Congress can assist by persuading FYROM to negotiate in good faith with Greece to resolve the name issue and to cease irredentist propaganda against Greece. Only in this way will FYROM's aspirations to fully integrate into the transatlantic community be realized.

Main Issues to Greek Americans. A detailed discussion of the issues facing the U.S. in its relations with Greece, Cyprus and Turkey is in the annual AHI Policy Statements available at www.ahiworld.org. These issues include: Cyprus, the Aegean Sea boundary, religious freedom for the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Turkey's new threat to peace, FYROM name-recognition, the Greek minority in Albania, and recognition of the Greek Pontian genocide.

Finally, in the interest of regional stability and conflict resolution, the U.S. should promote Turkey's emergence as a fully democratic state whether or not she enters the EU. This will require fundamental changes in Turkey's governmental institutions, a significant improvement in its human rights record, the settlement of the Cyprus problem on the terms referred to above, and publicly acknowledging the existing boundary in the Aegean Sea between Greece and Turkey established by treaties. Past and current U.S. policy has not had this effect and needs to be reviewed critically by Congress.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our written testimony to the subcommittee's attention.

**TESTIMONY OF HOWARD A. KOHR
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, AMERICAN ISRAEL PUBLIC AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE (AIPAC), TO THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON
STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS AND RELATED PROGRAMS**

April 2014

As the Middle East faces its most dramatic upheavals in decades, U.S. security assistance to Israel plays a key role in advancing American strategic interests in the region and ensuring the Jewish state's ability to defend itself. Iran's ongoing effort to achieve a nuclear weapons capability, instability in Egypt and Lebanon, and a bloody civil war in Syria constitute just some of the potential threats that Israel must prepare to confront in the year to come. In this context, AIPAC strongly urges the Subcommittee to approve the president's request of \$3.1 billion in security assistance for Israel in fiscal year 2015 in accordance with the 2007 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the United States and Israel. The approval of this assistance should include the legislatively mandated terms under which it has historically been provided, particularly provisions mandating the level of assistance, offshore procurement and early disbursement. In addition, we support a robust and bipartisan foreign aid program that ensures America's strong leadership position in the world.

A Region in Turmoil

Recent years have witnessed unprecedented turmoil in the Middle East – a phenomenon that has only continued, and in many ways intensified, in the past 12 months. Iran has yet to give up its quest to acquire a nuclear weapons capability despite ongoing negotiations and the signing of an interim agreement between Tehran and the P5+1. The Islamist regime is also continuing to smuggle sophisticated weaponry to its proxies Hamas and Hezbollah, including a recent effort – foiled by the Jewish state – to send a ship to Gaza that contain, among other deadly materiel, rockets capable of reaching all of Israel. Hezbollah, Hamas, Iran and Syria now have an unprecedented combined total of 170,000 rockets pointed at Israel.

In the north, the brutal civil war in Syria shows no sign of ending, and has now attracted an estimated 40,000 jihadis fighting dangerously close to Israel's border. Hezbollah continues to be a major force in Lebanon, while to the east the Jordanian monarchy faces growing challenges to its rule. And within Israel itself, rockets fired by terrorist groups in Gaza and the Sinai still fall routinely on Israeli civilian targets in the south. Amidst all this, Israel continues to seek peace with its Palestinian neighbors. Unfortunately, progress remains slow and uncertain, with Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas threatening to take steps to isolate Israel internationally if it fails to meet all Palestinian demands.

These developments point to a simple truth: U.S. security assistance to Israel, as the single most tangible expression of support for our most valuable ally in the region, remains critical to

ensuring not only Israel's security, but also the stability of and the advancement of U.S. interests in an increasingly unstable Middle East.

Israel: A Vital Strategic Partner

As a key pillar of America's Middle East security framework, the U.S.-Israel strategic partnership plays an indispensable role in combating common threats and realizing America's regional and global policy objectives. These threats include terrorism, proliferation, counterfeiting, cyber warfare, and the spread of radical Islamist ideology, among others. In this context, Israel's military strength and central geo-strategic location provide a strong deterrent to regional actors opposed to the United States. Indeed, Israel's stable, democratic and reliably pro-U.S. orientation remains unquestioned and, unlike its unstable, authoritarian neighbors, ensures that America can rely on its alliance with the Jewish state. Put differently, the historic U.S.-Israel alliance is among the only stabilizing features of a very unstable and unpredictable region.

The close strategic relationship between the United States and Israel originated with the two allies sharing key intelligence around the time of the 1967 Six-Day War. This partnership was later broadened and formalized in the early 1980s, when President Ronald Reagan and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir announced the establishment of the Joint Political Military Group to coordinate planning, exercises, and prepositioning against threats faced by both nations in the Middle East. Later in the decade, the United States designated Israel as a major non-NATO ally.

Since that period, the United States has prepositioned U.S. military equipment, such as ammunition and armor, in Israel. The two allies also engage in joint military exercises involving American and Israeli land, sea and air forces. Twice each year, U.S. Marines conduct desert warfare training with their Israel Defense Forces (IDF) counterparts, and American soldiers and security officials have received Israeli instruction on urban combat techniques. U.S. pilots hold mock dogfights with the Israeli Air Force and have tested aerial combat tactics and practiced refueling. In addition, Israel and the United States have cooperated on a wide range of intelligence-sharing programs, including monitoring Iranian, al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups.

An additional centerpiece of the interaction between the two militaries has been combined missile defense training, including the biannual Juniper Cobra exercise. In this maneuver, U.S. and Israeli forces practice cooperative tactics to counter the growing threat from ballistic missiles and long-range rockets. During 2012, this drill was combined with Austere Challenge, the largest joint bilateral military exercise ever conducted between the two forces. In November 2013, the United States, Italy and Greece joined Israel for the Juniper Stallion exercise – the largest military air exercise in Israel's history.

U.S. Assistance Helps Maintain Israel's Qualitative Military Edge (QME)

U.S. support for Israel through annual security aid has helped the Jewish state maintain its qualitative military edge (QME), which Congress has defined in legislation as Israel's "ability to

counter and defeat any credible conventional military threat from any individual state or possible coalition of states or from non-state actors.” This military superiority has prevented war by deterring Arab states from even considering future attacks on Israel, knowing they will face a U.S.-backed ally armed with the world’s most advanced weapons systems. U.S. security assistance also advances peace by making Israel’s enemies aware that there is no alternative to negotiations, thereby playing a role in securing Israel’s peace treaties with Jordan and Egypt. Today, both the United States and Israel share a commitment to advancing a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and America is now leading an effort to reach such an outcome through direct negotiations between the parties.

Cooperation Produces Critical New Military and Defense Technologies

The close partnership between the United States and Israel has yielded critically important military technologies that will enhance the security of both nations.

Iron Dome: Since 2005, terrorists in Gaza have fired more than 10,000 rockets indiscriminately into Israel, prompting the Jewish state to develop the Iron Dome rocket defense system. This defensive platform can intercept incoming Katyusha-style rockets in mid-air, saving lives and avoiding broader conflict. Recognizing its value, America has already provided \$495 million to help Israel purchase the system.

The Arrow: Among the world’s most sophisticated missile shields, the Arrow is the only operational system that has consistently proven that one missile can shoot down another at high altitudes and supersonic speeds.

David’s Sling: America and Israel are collaborating on this quick-reaction defense system that addresses the threats posed by short- and medium-range missiles and rockets rapidly spreading throughout the eastern Mediterranean Levant.

Saving American Lives on the Battlefield

Israel has also developed dramatic new technologies that have played a key role in saving U.S. lives during military conflicts. To cite just a few of the more important innovations:

Litening Pod: The Israeli-developed Litening Pod for strike aircraft identifies targets with laser precision from high altitudes, placing the pilot in less danger while reducing collateral damage on the ground.

Bradley Reactive Armor Tiles: Created by the Israeli military, the tiles overlay the Bradley Fighting Vehicle’s armor with embedded explosives that blast outward to suppress incoming fire. The tiles have protected thousands of U.S. troops in armed conflict.

Emergency Bandage: Carried in every first-aid kit in the U.S. military, the Israeli bandage stems blood loss, prevents infection and allows non-medically trained soldiers to stabilize the wounded quickly following an attack.

Increased Israeli Defense Spending

Israel has always fought its own battles and has never asked American troops to fight on its behalf. Instead, it has requested U.S. assistance to supplement the tremendous resources Israel already invests in its defense budget. Unfortunately, spiraling defense costs are forcing Israel to spend more on defense as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) than any other nation in the industrialized world – about 6 percent, or nearly one-and-a-half times that of the United States. However, the actual costs to the Israeli economy are much higher, taking into account lost productivity and the need for reserve duty, internal security and anti-terrorism spending. Even as Israel faces its own substantial budgetary pressures, during the next decade, Israel may well have to spend \$160 billion on defense, a significant increase over the previous 10-year period.

Israel's spending coincides with accelerated military investment fueled by the oil revenues of Israel's Arab and Iranian neighbors. Saudi Arabia's military budget doubled over the last decade, while Iran's rate of military spending has grown at a similar pace despite economic pressures. This is reflected in the major purchases and development of new arms that may put Israel at risk. Other Arab nations have also made large-scale purchases of weapons and military technology. Iran continues funding Hezbollah's military expansion. The military hardware – including American-built advanced fighter aircraft and naval vessels – that Israel must acquire over the next decade to maintain its QME is far more sophisticated, complex and expensive than previous Israeli purchases from the United States.

The most recent U.S.-produced front-line fighter aircraft deployed by Israel in the 2000s, the F-16I, costs \$45 million each. By comparison, the U.S. F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, which Israel plans to purchase later in this decade, will cost at least \$160 million per plane. Israel is also investing more than \$2 billion to develop cutting-edge systems to combat short-range rockets and long-range missiles, and Israel is building hundreds of upgraded tanks and armored vehicles to better protect troops from advanced anti-tank missiles in the hands of Hamas and Hezbollah.

The new realities of the rapidly changing Middle East have also led to many unexpected costs for Israel. To cite just one example, after terrorists repeatedly blew up the Sinai natural gas pipeline, which provided a large percentage of Israel's gas, Israel had to incur \$4 billion in additional expenses to fund imports of alternative, more expensive energy supplies. Given the increasing terrorist threats on its border with Egypt, the Jewish state was forced to build a fence on the southern border between Egypt and Israel at a cost of an estimated \$360 million. Now, in view of the spiraling chaos in Syria, Israel must construct a similar modern barrier on the Golan Heights.

In short, the extraordinary threats Israel faces – traditional and asymmetric, conventional and unconventional, short range weaponry (e.g., car bombs and mortars) and long-range missiles – are unlike those of any other country in the world.

A Robust Foreign Aid Budget Is Critical to U.S. National Security

AIPAC strongly believes that the broader U.S. foreign aid budget, which includes security assistance to Israel, is an essential component of America's national security strategy. Today, the U.S. foreign aid budget helps strengthen civil society and build institutional and economic capacity in the very places where thousands of American soldiers are risking their lives. As U.S. military leaders have repeatedly and readily acknowledged, a powerful military is inadequate unless it is backed by a strong civilian diplomatic presence and sufficient financial resources to help friends and undermine adversaries around the globe.

In today's globalized economy, U.S. foreign aid also helps American companies develop foreign markets, build stable business environments in developing countries, and thereby help create jobs at home. Foreign aid programs also help bring education, health care and transportation to hundreds of millions of potential new customers. Today, one in five American jobs is linked to U.S. exports. Foreign markets offer the best opportunities to expand the American economy.

At little more than one percent of the federal budget, foreign aid is a cost-effective and relatively small investment that saves U.S. taxpayers money. Using foreign aid dollars wisely today helps prevent the more costly wars and crises that might otherwise occur. Prevention – whether of terror attacks, weapons proliferation, pandemic disease, economic meltdown, societal collapse or the spread of radical ideology – is always cheaper and easier.

Conclusion

Few can predict what the coming year will bring in the Middle East, but one thing remains certain: The United States is strong when Israel is strong. This Subcommittee – headed so ably by Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member Lowey – deserves great credit for its stalwart advocacy for the U.S.-Israel relationship and the foreign aid budget over the years. This support will remain critical as America and Israel continue to work together to advance a more peaceful, stable and pro-Western Middle East.

**Testimony before the Subcommittee on State, Foreign
Operations, and Related Programs for Fiscal Year 2015**

**Committee on Appropriations
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC**

**By Gerry D. Scott, III
Director
American Research Center in Egypt**

Chairperson Granger, Ranking Member Lowey, and other members of the Subcommittee, I'd like to thank you for this opportunity to provide this testimony on proposed Fiscal Year 2015 funding for State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs. On behalf of the Chairman and the Board of the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE), we are submitting this testimony to express our strong support for continued United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funding for the preservation, conservation, and protection of unique World Heritage sites in Egypt.

As you know only too well, the political crisis in Egypt is having broad repercussions throughout Egyptian society and is deeply affecting US-Egyptian relations. But a little known consequence of the current situation in Egypt has been to place Egypt's extraordinary cultural heritage and its many unique and irreplaceable monuments and artifacts at severe risk. The rich heritage represented by Egypt's historical remains, a vital part of world heritage, is now directly threatened and global efforts spanning over 200 years to preserve and conserve this incredible cultural history may be destroyed or irreparably damaged. Past threats -- barely avoided -- to the unique holdings of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, are now becoming a reality at several other sites, tragically illustrated by the recent looting and severe damage to the Malawi National Museum in the Middle Egyptian city of Minya in August 2013, and the collateral bombing in January 2014 of the Islamic Art Museum and Manuscript Library in Cairo.

Founded in 1948, the American Research Center in Egypt is the oldest organization in the United States dedicated to working with the broad based US academic community and university system, as well as other research organizations, to preserve, conserve, explore, and catalogue Egypt's cultural heritage and to improve Egypt's ability to preserve and protect its own irreplaceable sites. Given this focus, ARCE plays a critical role in fostering strong cultural ties between the U.S. and Egypt. Made up of over 30 institutions dedicated to the study of Egyptology and the preservation of Egyptian antiquities, ARCE is the leader of a coordinated effort to focus on all aspects of Egypt's rich cultural heritage spanning the ancient Pharaonic period, as well as historically significant Christian and Islamic sites of more recent eras.

ARCE members include prestigious universities and museums such as Johns Hopkins University, Brown University, the University of California system, the University of Chicago, Georgia State University, New York University, the University of Pennsylvania, Yale University, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Getty Conservation Institute among others, all of which have made critical efforts at the multiple sites in Egypt where they work. ARCE itself undertakes conservation projects and training activities in Egypt, as well as maintaining an essential coordinating office in Cairo, working tirelessly on behalf of its members in securing permission to work within Egypt, and performing a unique role in training and developing Egypt's own human resources, specifically in the areas of archaeology, preservation, conservation and cataloging skills. Over 1000 Egyptians today have directly benefited from ARCE sponsored training programs that are designed to build their capabilities to protect and preserve their own cultural past. ARCE training in the critical cataloguing area has created a database of Egyptian artifacts and collections in the Cairo Museum that is literally invaluable in protecting Egypt's current holdings. All ARCE supported projects are at World Heritage designated sites.

While receiving financial support from its members and individual donors, in recent decades ARCE activities and those of its many member organizations have been either directly or indirectly supported by invaluable, targeted USAID funding. This visionary support by the US government has enabled ARCE and its member universities and

organizations to take extraordinary steps in recent years to preserve and conserve unique world heritage sites in Egypt. Today this impressive progress is seriously at risk. US government support and involvement in ensuring the protection of these sites and unique collections is now more important than ever; without it, the losses to Egypt's shared global history could be devastating.

While we are well aware that overall US government funding is highly constrained in the current budget environment, it is nonetheless critical that funds currently available for Egypt be considered for funding activities like those undertaken by ARCE and its US members in support of the critical preservation of Egypt's shared world heritage.

It is also important to note that the Committee on Appropriations has played an essential role over the past twenty years in helping to ensure the preservation of Egypt's irreplaceable global heritage. Because of its experience in conducting cultural research and fieldwork in Egypt and its ability to foster American-Egyptian relations in the areas of culture and education, ARCE was selected to undertake an important initiative by the Committee to provide funding for the preservation and restoration of Egypt's cultural heritage. In a visionary step, it was the subcommittee on Foreign Operations that initiated funding for the preservation of Egypt's global legacy through a grant from USAID. Under this grant, a broad program of work was initiated that included conservation of historically and culturally significant architecture, works of art, religious inscriptions, and archaeological artifacts representing thousands of years of Egypt's historical and cultural achievement, as well as a broad range of training programs for Egyptians related to conserving and preserving this invaluable legacy.

The results of this program have been far ranging and monuments that were on the verge of being lost have been saved and are now open to the public. In addition, hundreds of Egyptians have received technical training in various fields of heritage management, culturally significant objects have been preserved, and these results have been shared with the scholarly, professional, and general public through a series of publications. The work stands as a testament to the significant contribution that the United States of America has made to preserve Egypt's cultural heritage as embodied in its magnificent

monuments for future generations, as well as helping to insure that tourism can remain an important part of Egypt's economy.

In addition, ARCE has received follow on program grants from USAID, the most recent of which will conclude in July 2014. The timing of the end of this critical USAID support could not be worse. World Heritage sites are now highly vulnerable to looting and destruction, the recent bombing near the Islamic Museum being a prime example of this threat. Our member organizations, as well as our Egyptian colleagues and partners, are reporting greatly increased looting and destruction at key archeological sites throughout Egypt. USAID support is one of the few tools currently available to help protect these highly vulnerable but irreplaceable historic sites. In addition, during all the violence in Cairo and Egypt, ARCE activities have continued in operation and our staff has continued their work, even in times of diminished security. Our strong working relationship with USAID was confirmed once again by a timely grant by USAID of 1 million Egyptian pounds for emergency support at the severely damaged Islamic museum. We highly value our relationship with USAID and we believe it is critical that it go forward uninterrupted. Absent a new follow on grant, ARCE soon will be forced to downsize its staff in Cairo and this loss in expertise will be a tremendous blow to the US government's and ARCE's ability to help the Egyptian people at this very difficult time.

Because of the significance of these grants for the preservation of Egypt's cultural heritage, to the overall cultivation of the relationship between Egypt and the U.S., and to the vitality of the American Research Center in Egypt, we strongly urge the Committee and the Congress to continue to make such follow on programmatic grants available for this important work. Thank you very much for your consideration.

**STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN THORACIC SOCIETY
PATRICIA FINN, M.D, PRESIDENT**

**THE HOUSE STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS AND RELATED AGENCIES
APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE**

April 4, 2014

**Department of State
U.S. Agency for International Development
Tuberculosis Program
FY2015 Funding Recommendation: \$400 million**

The American Thoracic Society (ATS) appreciates Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member Lowey's leadership on global health. Tuberculosis (TB) is the second-leading infectious disease killer in the world, taking 1.3 million lives per year. Currently, about a third of the world's population is infected with the TB bacterium. TB is the third leading global killer of women of reproductive age and the leading cause of death among people with HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa. The rise in HIV infection levels and the neglect of TB control programs have caused a global resurgence of TB. While most TB prevalent today is a preventable and curable disease when international prevention and treatment guidelines are used, many parts of the world, such as Africa, are struggling to implement them. And according to the World Health Organization (WHO), an estimated 3 million people with TB are not being identified and treated. The global TB pandemic, including the spread of drug resistant TB, poses a public health threat to the U.S. **We recommend that the FY15 State-Foreign Operations Appropriations bill provide \$400 million for USAID's global tuberculosis program.**

Drug Resistant TB as a Global Health Crisis

Drug susceptible TB can be successfully treated with daily administration of inexpensive drugs for 6 – 9 months. Unfortunately, some patients do not complete their treatment and their TB then becomes resistant to one or more of the drugs, creating drug resistant TB. Multi-drug resistant (MDR) TB is resistance to the two main anti-TB drugs, isoniazid and rifampin. The drug treatment regimen for MDR-TB is excessively long (two years), expensive and extremely difficult for patients to tolerate, due to potentially severe side effects including hearing loss and psychosis. Extensively drug resistant (XDR) TB, which has been identified in most countries, including the U.S., is even deadlier. In 2011, totally drug resistant TB (TDR) emerged in India and other countries.

The WHO estimates that about 5% of all TB cases are MDR-TB and that less than 25% of this number are receiving appropriate treatment. The convergence of several factors threatens to result in drug resistant TB occurring on a much broader scale. These include inadequate attention to and funding for basic TB control measures in high TB burden, resource-limited settings, which also have high HIV prevalence, and the lack of investment in new drugs, diagnostics and vaccines for TB. However, less than half of the high MDR-TB burden countries have the capacity to diagnosis MDR-TB, let alone mount effective prevention and treatment efforts. The best way to prevent drug resistant TB is to invest in TB control programs around the globe. With

drug resistant TB spreading and so few people being identified and treated, a significantly increased scale-up of targeted MDR-TB identification and treatment efforts is urgently needed.

Drug Resistant TB is Threat to the U.S.

Although the U.S. is a low incidence country, cases of the disease are reported in every state in the U.S. annually. Drug resistant TB cases are a particular problem for the U.S., due to the high cost and intensive healthcare costs required. Between 2008 and 2012, the U.S. had 15 cases of extensively drug resistant (XDR) TB, which are extremely difficult and expensive to treat and exact a high toll on patients. Treatment costs for a single case of XDR-TB can be well over \$1 million and even then, patient survival is not guaranteed. According to a study published in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly* in March 2014, 373 MDR/XDR TB cases cost the U.S. health care system an estimated \$53 million between 2005 and 2007. In 2013, the state of Wisconsin had to spend \$4.6 million to control a TB outbreak in one county. The U.S. cannot afford not to address TB seriously.

HIV/AIDS-TB Integration

TB is a major killer of people with HIV globally and the leading cause of death for people with HIV in Africa. Because of the rapid fatality rates associated with TB in people with HIV/AIDS, it is critically important to increase efforts to detect and treat TB among this population. Yet, WHO data indicates that only about 10% of people living with HIV/AIDS are screened for TB. If active TB is left untreated, a TB-HIV co-infected person can die within weeks even if (s)he is on antiretrovirals for HIV. The continued TB pandemic threatens to undo much of the progress made by the U.S. investment in the fight against HIV/AIDS through PEPFAR, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.

TB in Women & Children

TB is the third leading cause of death among women of reproductive age. An estimated 2.9 million women develop TB and about 410,000 die of the disease around the world annually. TB presents a serious risk for pregnant women and infants. Studies from Mexico and India have shown that pregnant women with TB are four times more likely to die in childbirth.

TB is an under-recognized child health issue. In 2009, over 1 million children developed TB and at least 74,000 died as a result. About 32,000 of these children have drug-resistant TB. Also, the WHO has reported that in 2010, there were 10 million children orphaned as a result of at least one of their parent's dying of TB. TB in children is often missed or overlooked due to non-specific symptoms and difficulties in diagnosis. This has made it difficult to assess the actual magnitude of the childhood TB epidemic. Children have less developed immune systems and are more susceptible to getting severe forms of TB, such as TB meningitis, that are often fatal. TB can have devastating long term effects on children who can be left deaf, blind and/or totally paralyzed from TB meningitis, even after it is cured. Currently there is a lack of effective diagnostic tests that can detect TB in children, child-friendly drug formulations for treatment and care for children with TB. In 2013, the WHO, UNICEF, USAID and other partners released the *Roadmap for Childhood Tuberculosis*, which lays out a strategic framework for combating childhood TB. The ATS urges an enhanced effort, with resources to match to address childhood TB.

Need for New TB Tools

Although drugs, diagnostics, and vaccines for TB exist, these technologies are antiquated and are inadequate for controlling the global epidemic. The recent introduction of the new Xpert diagnostic test, developed with funding from the NIH, is already improving our ability to diagnose TB quicker, among HIV-infected people. The Xpert test can diagnose TB in less than 100 minutes, a vast improvement over the old standard TB diagnostic tool, sputum microscopy, which takes several days to complete diagnosis. USAID is a leading implementer of Xpert. Although preliminary information shows that Xpert is more effective at diagnosing TB in children than sputum microscopy, a more child-friendly and accurate diagnostic tool is still needed to diagnose pediatric TB. Current diagnostic tests to detect drug resistance take at least one month to complete. Faster drug susceptibility tests must be developed to stop the spread of drug resistant TB. The TB vaccine, BCG, provides some protection to children, but it has little or no efficacy in preventing pulmonary TB in adults.

There is a critical need for new anti-TB treatments and shorter drug regimens. A shorter drug regimen with new classes of drugs active against susceptible and drug-resistant strains would increase compliance, prevent development of more extensive drug resistance, and save program costs by reducing the time required to directly observe therapy for patients. In particular, a shorter MDR-TB regimen with fewer harmful side effects is urgently needed.

The Comprehensive TB Elimination Act, enacted into law in October 2008, provided authorization language to spur the development of new TB diagnostic, treatment and prevention tools through the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Provision of the ATS's recommendation level of \$243 million in FY2015 for CDC's Division of TB Elimination would accelerate early-stage research and epidemiology studies that are critical to the development of these new tools. In addition, USAID plays a vital role in supporting research into diseases that affect the developing world, including tuberculosis, and appropriate funding for USAID's TB research program will provide a strong U.S. reinvestment into new TB tools to help ease the global disease burden.

USAID TB Program

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is the largest bilateral donor supporting global TB prevention and control in 27 countries, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, South Africa, Uganda and Ukraine. USAID's TB program has proven to be highly effective in the prevention and treatment of TB and in saving lives. Over the past twenty years, the mortality rate from TB has decreased by 41% and in 2009, the Global Plan to Stop TB treatment success rate target of 85% was achieved. USAID's technical assistance to the most highly burdened countries has been essential to this success. Furthermore, USAID has made notable recent progress in addressing multi-drug resistant (MDR) TB. Between 2012 and 2013, the number of MDR-TB patients enrolled in treatment in USAID focus countries nearly doubled, from 26,000 to 45,000. Yet some countries still have insufficient capacity, including laboratory and infection control measures. Significantly more resources are required to rapidly scale up these efforts and prevent the further spread of TB in general and drug resistant TB.

The TB program also plays a critical role in successfully leveraging multi-lateral TB resources, including the Global Fund, by assisting countries in the development of grant applications and annual country strategic and operational plans.

USAID's overall goal is to contribute to the global reduction of morbidity and mortality associated with TB. USAID supports the implementation of the Stop TB strategy in priority countries and the goals and targets set forth in the Global Plan. USAID provides financial and technical support to five main areas including DOTS (directly-observed treatment short course therapy) expansion and enhancement, scaling up management of MDR/XDR, addressing HIV/TB co-infection, strengthening health systems and human resource capacity and developing new tools and improved approaches. Priority countries are selected based on epidemiology of TB, including a high burden of TB cases, high HIV/AIDS prevalence, and prevalence for drug resistance, and lagging case detection and treatment success rates.

FY2015 Recommendations

The Lantos-Hyde Act authorized \$4 billion over five years for global TB programs through USAID. We recommend that the FY2015 State-Foreign Operations Appropriations bill provide \$400 million for USAID's global tuberculosis program. The appropriation of an additional \$40 million for CDC's global TB activities through the FY15 Labor-HHS Appropriations legislation will provide the coordinated global TB investment envisioned under the Lantos-Hyde Act. The President's budget for FY2015 proposes to cut funding for USAID's TB program from \$236 million in FY2014 to \$191 million, a 19% cut. This reduction would have a devastating effect on global TB control. A funding cut of this magnitude would directly result in a withdrawal of TB program technical and programmatic assistance to at least 4 countries and would curtail the program's targeted MDR-TB scale-up at a time when USAID expertise and technical assistance in this area is urgently needed by many countries to control the spread of drug resistant TB. It would also result in a reduction of critically-needed U.S. support for new TB drug development, including shorter, easier to tolerate drug regimens that will enable more people to complete MDR-TB treatment and prevent the further spread of these deadly strains. The U.S. cannot afford to scale-back our leadership on TB at this time.

Over two-thirds of international funding for global TB control is provided through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, so it is critical that the U.S. provide an appropriate investment, particularly at this time when the Fund is projecting a significantly increased need to combat these diseases of poverty. We recommend that FY14 State-Foreign Operations Appropriations bill provide \$1.65 billion in FY2015 for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. Thank you for your consideration. We appreciate the opportunity to submit this statement for the record.

FISCAL YEAR 2015 TESTIMONY

ARMENIAN ASSEMBLY OF AMERICA

SUBMITTED BY BRYAN ARDOUNY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chairwoman Granger, Ranking Member Lowey, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, the Armenian Assembly of America (www.aaainc.org) submits the following testimony regarding U.S. assistance and policy in the South Caucasus region.

The Armenian Assembly urges the Subcommittee to allocate not less than \$40 million in assistance to Armenia, including at least \$1.7 million in Foreign Military Financing, and \$600,000 in International Military Education Training assistance to Armenia. In addition, the Assembly requests at least \$5 million in assistance to Nagorno Karabakh as well as directing funds to the largely Armenian populated Samtskhe-Javakheti region of Georgia and ensuring assistance to Christian and other minority communities at risk in the Middle East, and especially given the recent developments in Kessab, Syria. Further, given the troubling reports that Turkey allowed Al-Qaeda linked fighters to cross its border into Syria, as a consequence of which residents of the predominantly Armenian populated town of Kessab fled for their lives, we call upon Congress to take immediate action to safeguard the Armenian community there.

Established in 1972, the Armenian Assembly is the largest Washington-based organization promoting public understanding and awareness of Armenian issues. The Assembly's extensive experience in Armenia, working closely with key government agencies, officials, and charitable organizations, provides us with unique insight on how U.S. assistance can best advance policy goals in the region. We seek to maximize the effectiveness of U.S. assistance as well as strengthen the U.S. relationships with Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh. We represent Armenian Americans and those who share our goals. We strongly encourage Members to travel to the region to see first-hand the realities on the ground and the impact of U.S. policy as well as the Turkish and Azerbaijani blockades.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2015

I. ASSISTANCE TO ARMENIA – The Assembly urges the Subcommittee to allocate “not less than” \$40 million in U.S. assistance to Armenia. The United States has spoken clearly about the need for Turkey to lift its more than 20-year blockade of Armenia and establish diplomatic relations with Armenia, both of which are also required under international treaties. Despite Turkey's public commitment to normalize relations without preconditions as evidenced by the signing of the Protocols between Turkey and Armenia under international auspices in October of 2009, the Turkish government failed to do so. Working in tandem with Turkey, Azerbaijan torpedoed the Protocols, and also continues its blockade of Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh in lock-step with Turkey. Within Turkey, the banning of Twitter, YouTube, the jailing of journalists, including Turkish writer and publisher Ragıp Zarakolu, as well as the ongoing failure to return confiscated Armenian churches, remains a troubling trend.

We, therefore, urge Members of the Subcommittee to adopt new report language requiring a full accounting of the steps the United States has taken and the responses therein to eliminate the Turkish and Azeri blockades of Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh. We must and can do more to ensure that the last closed border in Europe is open. Continued and robust assistance helps to offset the impact of these blockades, and reflect America's values.

We also strongly support H.R.4347, the Turkey Christian Churches Accountability Act introduced by House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce and Ranking Member Eliot Engel as well as H.Res.532, introduced by Representatives Anna Eshoo, Tom Marino, Joe Kennedy, III and Bill Keating calling for internet freedom in Turkey.

As you know, Armenia continues to implement important market-based reforms, and in terms of economic freedom ranked 41st out of 178 countries rated by the Wall Street Journal-Heritage Foundation 2014 Index of Economic Freedom – well above other countries in the region. Armenia also met the FY 2014 eligibility requirements for the Millennium Challenge Corporation. **We strongly support a second U.S.-Armenia compact and urge its timely implementation.**

II. ASSISTANCE TO NAGORNO KARABAKH – The Assembly strongly urges that the Subcommittee allocate at least \$5 million for Nagorno Karabakh. The Assembly appreciates the Subcommittee's consistent support for humanitarian and development assistance to Nagorno Karabakh. **Given the ongoing humanitarian and development needs facing the people of Nagorno Karabakh, including healthcare, transportation infrastructure, education, demining, drinking water, and sanitation projects, the Assembly urges that at least \$5 million be allocated in the FY 15 Bill.**

In addition, the Assembly strongly urges the Subcommittee to ensure that continued funding be provided to rehabilitate damaged infrastructure and encourage development. Due to Azerbaijan's aggressive stance, the Nagorno Karabakh Republic, which has maintained a high level of democratic development, does not enjoy the benefit of international assistance and investment programs available to other former Soviet countries. The U.S. has the opportunity to make a significant difference in this situation.

III. ASSISTANCE TO THE SAMTSKHE-JAVAKHETI REGION OF GEORGIA – Building on U.S. assistance already provided to the Samtskhe-Javakheti region of Georgia through the Millennium Challenge Compact, the Assembly strongly supports targeted assistance for economic development and job-creation programs in Samtskhe-Javakheti.

IV. ASSISTANCE TO CHRISTIAN MINORITIES AT RISK IN THE MIDDLE EAST – The Assembly remains deeply concerned about the ongoing unrest and violence in Syria, including the most recent attack on the predominately Armenian Christian town of Kessab, Syria. While we welcome America's humanitarian assistance to help meet the acute needs of people inside Syria and refugees across the region, with many Syrian-Armenian families forced to flee to Armenia, **we urge the Subcommittee to direct the State Department and USAID to allocate additional funds to Armenia as it seeks to absorb refugees from Syria as well as implement measures to ensure that gaps in distribution of relief aid are addressed so that all those in need of urgent humanitarian assistance are reached.**

The Assembly would like to remind the Subcommittee that in March of 2010 over 100,000 Armenians living in Turkey were threatened with preemptory deportation. In addition, pursuant to the 2013 United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) Annual Report, repression of religious freedom and violence against religious minorities in Turkey continues. We, therefore, urge the Subcommittee to include report language that makes it clear that minority communities, wherever they may reside, shall be afforded protection and safeguarded.

V. SECTION 907 OF THE FREEDOM SUPPORT ACT – Given Azerbaijan’s increasingly anti-Armenian rhetoric and cease-fire violations, the Assembly urges this Subcommittee to suspend the waiver authority it granted and to fully reinstate Section 907.

As the Subcommittee is aware, in the aftermath of September 11th, pursuant to then-Secretary of State Colin Powell’s request for flexibility to counter terrorist elements and organizations operating in Azerbaijan, Congress granted a conditional and limited waiver to Section 907. Since that time, Azerbaijan has continued its unrelenting war rhetoric against Armenia. **Given Azerbaijan’s military expenditures, which are reported to exceed the entire national budget of Armenia, continued war mongering, cease-fire violations, and an inexplicable pardon of an Azeri officer (Ramil Safarov) who brutally murdered an Armenian officer (Gurgen Margaryan) at a NATO partnership for peace training exercise, the Assembly urges the Subcommittee to reinstate Section 907 and cease military assistance to Azerbaijan.**

Alternatively, the Assembly supports this year’s request by the Armenian Caucus to include additional certification language to Section 907 as follows: “In the last fiscal year, Azerbaijan has not taken hostile action, either through military force or incitement, including but not limited to threatening pronouncements by government officials, toward Armenia or Nagorno Karabakh, and has both stated and demonstrated its commitment to pursuing a lasting peace with Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh through solely non-violent means.”

VI. THE NAGORNO KARABAKH PEACE PROCESS – The Assembly requests funding for confidence-building measures to help facilitate a peaceful resolution of the Karabakh conflict.

Every year that the Nagorno Karabakh conflict continues without a solution, the risk of resumption of hostilities remains. Already the cease-fire violations have become more acute and frequent. Such cease-fire violations should not come as a surprise given declarations by Azerbaijani President Aliyev that “our main enemies are Armenians of the world” and repeated threats to launch a new war in Karabakh.

The United States as a Co-Chair of the OSCE Minsk Group has a vested interest in advancing peace and bringing stability to the region. In fact, promoting regional cooperation and economic integration in the South Caucasus is a strategically important goal for the United States. The governments of Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh have consistently indicated their desire to peacefully resolve the conflict, and have offered confidence-building measures to help reduce tensions and build trust.

Azerbaijan, however, has chosen a different path – one of blockade, bellicose statements, and attempts to isolate Armenia as evidenced by Azerbaijan's counterproductive stance to the Armenia-Turkey Protocols, and pardon of the axe murderer Safarov.

This continued pattern of aggression raises serious questions about Azerbaijan's commitment to reaching a peaceful and lasting solution to the Karabakh conflict. The OSCE Co-Chairs should directly and publicly condemn such statements emanating from Azerbaijan and call upon the government of Azerbaijan to desist from making further threats against Armenia and Karabakh. In addition, the U.S. government should carefully review its policies in the region and seek measures that increase regional cooperation while at the same time address Azerbaijan's actions that thwart U.S. objectives. Failure to do so can have negative repercussions on an already fragile cease-fire.

In order to facilitate peace, the Assembly requests that funds for confidence-building measures continue to be made available for increased cooperation among the parties to the conflict: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorno Karabakh. In particular, the Assembly recommends that the Subcommittee urge Azerbaijan to support the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)-sponsored confidence-building measures that facilitate interaction among the parties.

In addition, the Assembly strongly believes that Nagorno Karabakh's participation in direct negotiations should be restored as any solution to the conflict requires the consent of the people and leadership of Karabakh. The Assembly also urges the U.S. Co-Chair to the OSCE Minsk Group to uphold the fundamental principles of democracy, the right to self-determination and other basic human rights. Finally, the Assembly urges that the U.S. Department of State remove any official or unofficial restrictions on U.S.-Karabakh relations.

VII. U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE – The Assembly supports the Administration's FY 15 request of \$1.7 million in Foreign Military Financing, and \$600,000 in International Military Education Training assistance to Armenia. Armenia continues its strategic partnership with the United States in the region extending its full support for U.S.-led peace-keeping deployments in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kosovo, and also tripled its deployment of troops to the NATO International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

The Assembly strongly believes that it is in the U.S. national interest to build upon this important area of cooperation with Armenia, and looks forward to working with the Subcommittee to further expand U.S.-Armenia military relations.

VIII. ENERGY SECURITY – During the past decade, strategic energy projects launched with U.S. support in the South Caucasus have created long-term development opportunities for most of the nations in the region. However, these initiatives have not benefited Armenia, due to Turkish and Azerbaijani attempts to isolate Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh through blockades and other measures. Such actions to exclude Armenia from regional projects run counter to stated U.S. policy goals of regional cooperation and economic integration.

The Assembly, therefore, urges the Subcommittee to utilize all the tools at its disposal to pave the way for Armenia's full involvement in and integration with existing and future energy and development projects in the region.

VIX. AFFIRMING THE U.S. RECORD ON THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE – As we approach the 99th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, Congress will have another opportunity to adhere to its long-standing values by reaffirming America's proud chapter in history in helping to save the survivors of the first genocide of the twentieth century. It was Congress that acted – chartering the Near East Relief in 1919, and providing over \$100 million in humanitarian relief – an extraordinary and unprecedented effort at that time. We urge Members to participate in the April 9th Congressional Observance of the Armenian Genocide taking place in the Rayburn Gold Room. Moreover, we strongly urge President Barack Obama to fulfill his campaign promise and expand upon his statement last year, wherein he used an Armenian term - *Meds Yeghern* - to describe the Armenian Genocide, and unequivocally affirm the Genocide.

CONCLUSION – Chairwoman Granger, Ranking Member Lowey and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of the Armenian-American community, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to Congress for its assistance to Armenia and the Nagorno Karabakh Republic. Armenian Americans gratefully remember the support the U.S. provided after the 1988 earthquake in Armenia, as Armenia moved boldly toward independence in 1991, during Karabakh's struggle for freedom and democracy, and America's proud World War I record of intervention during the 1915 Armenian Genocide. The enduring and natural bonds that exist between the U.S. and Armenia are readily apparent in Armenia's ongoing support for America. Armenians in Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh consider the United States a close friend. This is a relationship that spans families and generations across the three countries. Given its central location, Christian heritage, entrepreneurial spirit and western value system, Armenia is poised to play a pivotal role in helping the United States achieve its stated policy objectives in the region. The Armenian Assembly of America greatly appreciates your attention to these very important matters and looks forward to working with the distinguished Members of the Subcommittee throughout the 113th Congress.

**The Armenian American Community & U.S. Foreign Assistance Policy
For Fiscal Year 2015
Presented by Kate Nahapetian - Government Affairs Director
Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA)**

Testimony before the U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs: April 4, 2014

The Armenian American community requests:

- 1) At least \$5 million in U.S. developmental aid to Nagorno Karabakh.
- 2) Zero-out U.S. military aid to Azerbaijan until it ceases its aggression, renounces violence, and commits to a purely peaceful resolution of regional conflicts.
- 3) At least \$40 million in U.S. economic assistance to Armenia.
- 4) In light of the recent attacks on Kessab, a special focus on the delivery of humanitarian and resettlement aid to Armenians and other at-risk minorities in Syria, as well as targeted aid to help Armenia settle thousands fleeing from Syria.
- 5) At least 10% of U.S. assistance to Georgia to be earmarked for job creation programs in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region of that country.
- 6) Language strengthening Section 907 restrictions on U.S. aid to Azerbaijan.
- 7) Ending the Exclusion of the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh from the peace process:

1) At least \$5 million in development assistance for Nagorno Karabakh:

We want to thank the Subcommittee for its longstanding leadership in support of this aid program and for consistently including language in its report calling for U.S. assistance in Nagorno Karabakh.

Since FY98, direct U.S. aid to Nagorno Karabakh has represented a powerful investment in peace and an enduring expression of America's leadership in supporting a negotiated and democratic resolution of security and status issues related to the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh. This direct aid has met pressing humanitarian needs, providing, most recently, desperately needed clean water to families and the clearing of villages and farmlands of mines and unexploded ordnance. According to the Nagorno Karabakh Republic, the war caused an estimated over \$5 billion in damages. Nearly twenty years since the cease-fire established in 1994, Karabakh is still suffering from significant infrastructure damage, including the shortage of safe drinking water. In addition, Nagorno Karabakh continues to suffer one of the highest per capita landmine accidents in the world.

We urge the Subcommittee to expand this vital assistance program, to support a needy population that has strived mightily, against aggression and blockades, to build a strong democracy, develop a free market economy, and work toward an enduring peace for all the peoples of this region. Since 1991, Nagorno Karabakh has successfully conducted five parliamentary and five presidential elections - that have been praised by international observers as free, fair and transparent. The most recent presidential election held in July 2012 was favorably received by more than 80 international observers from two dozen countries, including the United States.

2) Suspension of U.S. military aid to Azerbaijan:

The Azerbaijani government of Ilham Aliyev neither needs nor deserves American military aid. It would neither serve our national interests nor advance our American values to provide aid to a military whose leadership frequently threatens to start a new war and regularly launches cross-border attacks not only into Nagorno Karabakh, but also Armenia, a NATO Partnership for Peace country, where border villages report being under siege by growing sniper fire from Azerbaijan. In addition to threatening to renew full-scale hostilities, President Aliyev refuses U.S. and international calls to pull back snipers, has made land claims on all of Armenia, and openly incites anti-Armenian hatred, including against Americans of Armenian descent. As was widely reported in the international media, on August 31, 2012, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev personally pardoned an unrepentant, convicted axe-murderer for killing a NATO Partnership for Peace participant (while he slept) because he was Armenian. Immediately after his pardon, this convicted killer received a promotion in the Azerbaijani military, an apartment, and years of back pay for his prison time. The pardon was condemned around the world, including by President Obama, Members of Congress, the European Parliament, OSCE, Council of Europe, and NATO.

We respectfully call upon the Subcommittee to suspend the appropriation of Fiscal Year 2015 U.S. military aid to Azerbaijan until its government ceases cross-border attacks, ends its threats of renewed war, and agrees to a settlement of regional conflicts through peaceful means alone.

3) At least \$40 million in Assistance to Armenia:

As members of the Subcommittee know, Armenia, a crucial ally in a strategic region of the world, has extended robust support for U.S.-led peace-keeping deployments in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kosovo, and is cooperating with the U.S. on a broad range of regional and security challenges. In June 2011, as countries were pulling out of Afghanistan, Armenia actually tripled its troop deployment there. Armenia has four times more troops in Afghanistan per capita than Turkey and ten times more per capita than either Canada or France. In February of this year, Armenia pledged to keep its military contingent in Afghanistan even after NATO's mission is concluded in order to support the U.S.-led alliance to train and assist the Afghan army. Armenian Defense Minister Seyran Ohanian stated that Armenia is committed to "continuous contribution to coalition efforts to establish lasting security in Afghanistan." In addition, Armenia is regularly ranked highly by the Wall Street Journal/ Heritage Foundation Index of Economic Freedom, and met the Fiscal Year 2014 eligibility criteria for the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

At the same time, the people of landlocked Armenia, the world's first Christian state, continue to face the devastating impact of Turkey and Azerbaijan's dual economic blockades. Our assistance has played a vital role in helping alleviate these blockades (among the longest in modern history) and promoting Armenia's free market system and democratic development. It is for this reason that we ask the Subcommittee to appropriate no less than \$40 million in overall FY15 economic aid (including Economic Support Fund, International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement, and Global Health Programs) for Armenia.

4) Assistance to Christian and other minority communities in and from Syria:

The recent Turkey-backed, al Qaeda-linked attack that depopulated the Armenian town of Kessab, Syria in late March 2014 highlights the tremendous vulnerability of the Christian and minority communities in Syria. We remain troubled that distribution gaps in need-based international aid deliveries to Aleppo and throughout Syria have resulted in desperately needed food, medicine, and other relief supplies not reaching Armenians, Christian communities, and other at-risk and vulnerable minorities. We ask the Subcommittee to formally call upon the Administration to put in place policies and practices to ensure that need-based aid reaches all at-risk populations.

We also ask the Subcommittee to instruct the State Department and USAID to ensure the allocation to Armenia of a proportional level of the U.S. and international aid supporting the efforts to regional states to resettle those fleeing from Syria. As has been widely reported, more than ten thousand from Syria have sought safe-haven in Armenia, a state that has only received very modest levels of U.S. and international relief and resettlement assistance.

5) Assistance to the Javakhk Region in Georgia:

We join with the Congressional Armenian Caucus in encouraging the Subcommittee, as part of a robust U.S. aid package to Georgia, to ensure that 10% of U.S. assistance to Georgia is targeted to the largely Armenian-populated region of Samtskhe-Javakheti (Javakhk) in south-central Georgia, including funding for badly-needed job-creation programs and ongoing improvements to transportation and communication infrastructure.

6) Strengthening Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act:

Enacted in 1992, Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act stands as a statutory expression of U.S. opposition to Azerbaijan's blockades and other aggressive uses of force against Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh. Since its enactment, Azerbaijan has not lifted its illegal blockades and has ignored House Appropriations Committee Report language opposing its destabilizing threats. The Congress should limit the President's waiver authority in the face of these provocations by Baku by adding the following certification requirement, effectively narrowing the President's waiver authority: *"In the last fiscal year, Azerbaijan has not taken hostile action, either through military force or incitement, including but not limited to threatening pronouncements by government officials toward Armenia or Nagorno Karabakh, and has both stated and*

demonstrated its commitment to pursuing a lasting peace with Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh through solely non-violent means."

7) Ending the Exclusion of the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh from the Peace Process:

The best and most sustainable path to peace requires direct engagement with the people and government of Nagorno Karabakh, whose fate and future are the subject of ongoing talks and whose security will rest on the outcome of these negotiations. As is well known, the Nagorno Karabakh Republic was one of the three parties to the 1994 cease-fire, which ended military hostilities between Nagorno Karabakh and Azerbaijan. In its aftermath, Nagorno Karabakh participated in the OSCE Minsk Group peace process as a partner, along with Armenia and Azerbaijan. Since 1998, however, at Baku's insistence, Nagorno Karabakh has been excluded from the peace process. Nagorno Karabakh should, in the interests of peace and common sense, be a full participant in all talks regarding its very future.

In addition to these seven specific priorities, we would like, in closing to add a final thought about the future of the U.S.-Armenia economic relationship. In light of the downward trend in U.S. economic aid to Armenia, we encourage the Subcommittee to encourage the Administration to prioritize bilateral U.S.-Armenia trade and investment promotion, including through the negotiation of a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement, a Double Tax Treaty, and other economic accords. The American Chamber of Commerce in Armenia and the ANCA have formally called for expanding economic relations through such agreements, as have U.S. businesses operating in Armenia, among them Microsoft, FedEx, NASDAQ and Marriot.

The ANCA, as always, looks forward to working with the Subcommittee to strengthen the U.S.-Armenia alliance and to promote stability in the region.

Statement of Mr. David D. Arnold**President****THE ASIA FOUNDATION (TAF)****Submitted to the House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs****April 2014**

Madame Chairwoman, Ranking Member & Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to submit this testimony as President of the Asia Foundation (TAF). Over the past 60 years, The Asia Foundation has made sustained investments to build democratic institutions, reform economies, promote good governance, support civil society capacity and empower women throughout Asia. These investments have helped to support political and economic reforms and stability in countries throughout the region that are important and reliable allies for the United States. To sustain and build on this record of accomplishment, The Asia Foundation is requesting \$17 million for FY 2015, which is the same level of funding as FY 2014 and FY 2013.

Established in 1954, The Asia Foundation is a private, non-profit, nongovernmental organization. An annual appropriation is authorized under The Asia Foundation Act of 1983 (22USC4402). The Act acknowledged the importance of stable funding for TAF and endorsed its ongoing value and contributions to U.S. interests in Asia. Through its programs, TAF promotes good governance, democratic institutions, the development of a robust civil society and economic reforms to foster sustainable and inclusive growth. Through 18 country offices, TAF works with hundreds of established and emerging Asian partner organizations and identifies reform minded individuals and future leaders. These investments in human capital have paid off. TAF grantees can be found throughout the public and private sectors in Asia, and are leaders of government, industry and an increasingly diverse civil society.

One of TAF's signature initiatives is the Books for Asia program, where TAF has provided over 42 million English-language books to more than 20 countries—600,000 in 2013 alone. Through this program, millions of Asian students and current and future leaders have gained access to global sources of knowledge and a better understanding of the United States. Since 2007, when Congressional appropriators suggested that TAF begin a books program in Burma, TAF has donated over 80,000 books to 200 libraries, universities, think tanks, schools, monasteries, NGOs and government agencies across Burma through the American Center/Embassy Rangoon. TAF is now also supporting community library development, book donations and book mobiles through the Myanmar Book Aid and Preservation Foundation and Daw Khin Kyi's Foundation Mobile Library (a foundation named for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's mother). At present, TAF is also piloting a book mobile program in Afghanistan. With an \$18,000 investment and donation of 10,000 books, the book mobile pilot project will serve two boys' and two girls' schools in different districts in Jalalabad, reaching 50 children at each

school. The vans travel to the schools six days a week to carry out reading programs and meet with school administrators and parents to encourage reading in a country where the literacy rate is extremely low.

TAF's deep experience, country-specific expertise in Asia and our long-term commitment to and relationships in the region distinguish us from other nongovernmental organizations. TAF is often called upon by the U.S. State Department and host governments to undertake sensitive tasks that only can be pursued by a private organization trusted by host governments and local civil society, such as the development of democratic institutions, expansion of civil society and serving as a neutral intermediary in local conflict situations. Examples include:

In 2010, TAF was chosen by the Philippine Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) as the only American member of the multinational International Contact Group to support the Mindanao peace process. In 2012, a framework peace agreement was signed after 40 years of conflict. Following this agreement, in 2013, TAF was again chosen by both sides to participate on the Independent Third Party Monitoring Team established by the negotiations to monitor and assess the implementation of the peace agreement. At the March signing of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro, TAF was commended for its role.

This year, TAF has been invited by USAID to serve as a member of the Steering Committee for the 2014 USAID Asia Regional Civil Society Experience Summit in Bangkok, in partnership with USAID and UNDP. TAF, as the sole NGO on the steering committee, will play a key role in organizing and convening the Summit as a co-host. TAF will draw on its wide ranging network of Asian civil society partners and specialists in cutting edge philanthropy and public-private partnerships to enrich this U.S. government initiative to highlight the critical role that civil society plays in sustainable democracies. This Summit is a major component of the "Stand for Civil Society Initiative" announced by President Obama at the UN General Assembly in September 2013. Both examples demonstrate our strong credibility and position of trust in Asia, which makes TAF an irreplaceable American asset.

Asia is an increasingly critical region to the United States for economic and security reasons. The region's economic success and advances of the last decade often obscure the very real challenges facing the region, including challenges to democracy and governance, lack of adherence to the rule of law, widespread corruption, political volatility and religious and ethnic conflict. In our 60th year, TAF will capitalize on opportunities to respond to those challenges, framing our programs broadly around the critical missions that have long been at the heart of our work: promotion of democratic governance by addressing the lack of transparency and accountability in government; expanding sustainable economic growth by assisting small business creation and addressing persistent poverty and rising income inequality; advancing the rights and opportunities for women by addressing the exclusion of women from political and economic life and combating trafficking; reducing ethnic and religious conflicts through conflict management and mediation; increasing access to justice and respect for the rule of law and human rights, and addressing disaster management, climate change response, and water resource management. In support of those goals, The Asia Foundation is requesting \$17 million for FY 2015, which is the same level of funding as the current year and FY 2013. In making this steady

state request, we are very aware of the FY 2015 budgetary pressures on the Committee. We respectfully suggest, however, that TAF is an especially cost-effective investment for the Congress in a time of budget constraints. TAF takes pride in its proven ability to leverage the funds appropriated by Congress to raise funds from other sources. TAF raises over \$4 from other donors for every \$1 of Congressional appropriations. At the same time, TAF is a lean organization, allocating over 85% of its funding to program, and is recognized for its low operating to program cost ratio.

The Administration's request of \$12 million represents a cut of 30% in the Foundation's core funding and would be devastating to TAF's ability to meet our goals and serve U.S. interests in Asia. A cut of this magnitude would:

- 1) **Harm TAF's ability to maintain its Asian field office network:** Appropriated funding is critical to TAF's ability to maintain its presence in Asia, specifically in those countries of priority to U.S. interests and where no other organization has the history and presence on the ground, including Burma, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, China and India. Trust is built on continuity, and TAF's continuing, ongoing presence in the countries of Asia has made the organization a trusted and reliable partner on programs that advance democratic reform in the region. For example, because of a history of trust established over the past 30 years of cooperation with local partners and Muslim leaders, TAF's programs in conflict areas of southern Thailand have helped to resolve core grievances between Muslim communities and the national government. (Thailand is a largely Buddhist country-nearly 95%). TAF programs have facilitated the efforts of local partners to provide tangible changes to national policy regarding local identity. This has enabled the local government to change the names of 10 villages in the south which had been given locally offensive names by the national government and to ensure that government services are provided in the language of the local Malay Muslim population. Closure of TAF offices would breach that trust and curtail TAF's effectiveness on behalf of U.S. interests.
- 2) **Significantly diminish its program responsiveness and flexibility:** A hallmark of TAF's approach to programming is to be responsive to needs on the ground, to be a trusted partner to local organizations, and to provide innovative solutions to often controversial problems. We convene multiple stakeholders, including government, civil society and the private sectors to negotiate solutions, and provide critical funding for pilot programs with local organizations that often attract other donor funding or result in host government commitments to continuation of the programs. One example is our reopening of an office in Burma this year, an office that was first opened in 1954, to assist in that country's new efforts to move to open and just governance. TAF has already made key investments in capacity building to support Burma's Chairmanship of ASEAN, a USG priority in 2014, and in a first-ever survey of sub-national governments in the country in cooperation with a Burmese research center. TAF made similarly rapid responses to new circumstances when it reopened its office in Afghanistan in February 2002, when it began operations in Timor Leste at the time of independence in 1999, and in Mongolia, when Mongolia's leadership sought out TAF's help in 1989, soon after that country's break with the Soviet Union.

- 3) **Reduce the ability of TAF to leverage other funding:** TAF's successful leveraging of other funds extends and increases the impact of its programs. As noted, for every dollar appropriated by the Congress to the Asia Foundation, the Foundation has leveraged over \$4 from other sources. TAF has been commended by this Committee and others in the Congress for its efforts to leverage our appropriation, and we have worked hard to earn those commendations. I note that TAF was particularly successful in this regard under the stewardship of my predecessor, former Congressman Doug Bereuter. Multilateral and bilateral development agencies, including those of Britain, Australia, Denmark and others have recognized our value through funding a wide range of critical democracy and development programs. TAF even has a pioneering grant from the Korean development agency (KOICA), the first time they have ever funded a non-Korean organization. Private sector support for the Foundation has also increased. The cut proposed by the Administration damages TAF's efforts to make the most of every appropriated dollar. In effect, a cut of \$1 in appropriations would likely result in a cut of \$5 in programs that advance U.S. interests in Asia. Bear in mind that as valuable as these public and private leveraged funds are, they are invariably tied to specific projects. Congressional funding, through this core appropriation, provides the essential flexibility to maintain our continuous on-the-ground presence throughout Asia. It is what helps us to attract those other leveraged funds.
- 4) **Be perceived as an indication of U.S. withdrawal from Asia.** Support for TAF is seen in the region as a continued, long-term commitment by the U.S. to Asia. A reduction in TAF's field office presence resulting from a drastic funding cut would send a signal that the U.S. is reducing rather than rebalancing its commitment to Asia.

Over the last two fiscal years, TAF has sustained just over a 10 percent reduction in appropriated funding from the FY11 and FY12 level of \$19 million. Those reductions have already had an impact on TAF's program. For instance, we were forced to close our office in Singapore and scale back our operations in Korea. Funding at \$17 million will sustain The Asia Foundation's program investments begun in recent years with Congressional encouragement, such as our continued work in predominantly Muslim countries, including Afghanistan, Indonesia, and Pakistan, and an expansion of our programs in Burma, where we have restarted a program in a newly open environment. A significant cut would force TAF to close additional offices largely funded by appropriated funds, such as Burma, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam, countries of priority interest to the U.S., and would threaten ongoing operations and programs that are of proven value to the U.S. Government.

FY 2015 PLAN

The Foundation's core work is in five major areas:

- **Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law**
- **Women's Empowerment**
- **Economic Reform, and Development**

- **Environment**
- **Peaceful and Stable Regional Relations**

The Asia Foundation is first and foremost a field-based organization. Through a cost-effective combination of grant-making and direct program operations, TAF maximizes program impact while keeping costs low—despite the continuing challenge of providing security for our field office staff, particularly in volatile situations such as in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

TAF makes nearly 800 grants a year to partner organizations in Asia. Past committee report language has commended the effectiveness of our grant-making role in building local capacity and strengthening civil society institutions throughout Asia, an approach both unique and needed. TAF assistance promotes reform, by providing training, technical assistance and seed funding to new and emerging local organizations, as well as working with more established partners. We diligently evaluate and assess the impact of our programs and we are proud of our track record.

Level funding at \$17 million in FY 2015 would position the Foundation to maintain and extend programs in countries struggling with corruption, internal conflicts and weak democratic processes and institutions. In particular, Congressional support at a steady state level would enable TAF to:

- Increase engagement to support Burma's democratic progress and its regional role as the 2014 Chair of ASEAN;
- Promote engagement of traditional leaders, including religious leaders, in community development, election observation and education in Indonesia, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan;
- Counter corruption and improve public accountability efforts in the Philippines, Timor Leste, Vietnam and Mongolia;
- Sustain women's empowerment programs throughout Asia, including developing economic opportunity and entrepreneurship for women, supporting girls' education, and countering trafficking and domestic violence, especially in Afghanistan during the upcoming transition period;
- Support leadership development and training for new and emerging leaders through TAF's Asia Development Fellows Program;
- Extend conflict resolution and peace processes in Afghanistan, the Philippines, Nepal and Burma, and in largely Muslim southern Thailand where lack of security and ethnic/religious conflict threatens national stability;

CONCLUSION: We appreciate the Committee's longstanding trust and support for the Asia Foundation. The Congressional appropriation provided for in the 1983 Asia Foundation Act has been invaluable to TAF's ability to achieve results on-the-ground and fulfill our shared mission to maintain the U.S. presence and advance U.S. interests in Asia. Thus we respectfully urge that the Committee sustain its support for the Asia Foundation at the current level of \$17 million.

(A full listing of Asia Foundation programs may be found on our website at www.asiafoundation.org)

Azerbaijan and Armenia **Status and Recommendations**

**Testimony for the Record
FY 2015 Appropriations
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs
Committee on Appropriations
US House of Representatives**

**Presented By:
Dr. L. R. Lawrence, Jr.
President
Bob Lawrence & Associates, Inc
Alexandria, VA 22314
April 4, 2014**

Madam Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee: My name is Bob Lawrence, and I am President of Bob Lawrence & Associates, Inc., a consulting firm headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia. For the past ten years, we have worked with Renaissance Associates, SA, a private sector group of Azerbaijani businessmen with offices in Baku and in Zug, Switzerland. I am here, today, to discuss the situation in the South Caucasus and to make recommendations concerning some things which will improve the situation there for the people and businesses affected. My testimony addresses a variety of salient things which have happened in Azerbaijan and Armenia over the past two years, followed by recommendations for actions which this Subcommittee could take in relation to Foreign Operations Appropriations.

Importance of Azerbaijan to the United States:

Azerbaijan is important to the interests of the United States, and the level of importance is growing. Ambassador Morningstar has stated as much in a recent conversation with the press. The three areas which stand out most prominently are Defense, Energy, and Intelligence.

Defense: Of all the countries in the Eurasian region, Azerbaijan has been the strongest and most dependable ally in the War on Terror. Azerbaijan has provided troops to fight on our side in Iraq and Afghanistan, where they have served with honor. While the Manas Air Base in Kyrgyzstan is now closed to us, over 40% of our materiel supplies come through Azerbaijan, and our planes refuel at Azerbaijani air bases. Our troops coming out of Afghanistan pass, with safety, across the Caspian to Baku, and across Azerbaijan as a transit path to Western Europe.

Energy: Azerbaijani oil and gas provides a critical, alternate energy supply to Europe, which is otherwise dominated by Russian interests. Azeri oil flows up pipelines thru Georgia, between Russia and Armenia, thru Turkey to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan. Azeri gas will soon flow thru Turkey and up into Europe. This Azeri supply is critical to the security and wellbeing of the

people of Europe. Without Azeri oil and gas, Europe would be even more dependent on Russian energy resources than it is today. It is apparent that this dependence on Russian energy has dampened Europe's, and in particular Germany's, willingness to invoke tougher sanctions against Russia to deter the aggression in Crimea and possibly eastern Ukraine. Under these circumstances, supporting Azerbaijan as an independent energy alternative for Europe is more critical than ever.

Intelligence: Being located in such a critical location on the "Silk Road" in Eurasia, Azerbaijan becomes a center of information regarding activities in the region. Again, this underscores the critical nature of our relationship with this country.

While Azerbaijan continues to grow in importance to the region, Armenia has become a center for international criminals and crime. In March 2012, before the House and the Senate, FBI Director Robert Mueller made the following statement: ***Organized Crime: Today, international criminal enterprises run multi-national, multi-billion-dollar schemes from start to finish. For example, late last year, an investigation by the FBI and its partners led to the indictment and arrest of over 70 members and associates of an Armenian organized crime ring for their role in nearly \$170 million in health care fraud. This case, which involved more than 160 medical clinics, was the culmination of a national level, multi-agency, intelligence-driven investigation. To date, it remains the largest Medicare fraud scheme ever committed by a single enterprise and criminally charged by the Department of Justice.***

An Armenian newspaper, published in Yerevan, published a story claiming that 30 members of the above Armenian crime ring were able to escape the United States and return to Armenia, where the Armenian government is refusing to extradite them back to the United States. Other news articles indicate that these criminals brought tens of millions of dollars with them. There is no indication that any of them or any of their stolen money has been returned from Armenia to the United States.

Madam Chairman: Here is a situation where a rogue nation, Armenia, is clearly protecting criminals who targeted the United States to steal \$170 Million from Medicare. Armenia has yet to comply with four United Nations Security Council directives, instructing them to leave the lands of Azerbaijan which they presently occupy. Armenian snipers have killed small Azeri children in the Line of Contact between Azeri and Armenian forces; murders which have never been investigated. More recently, Armenian combatants in the Line of Contact machine-gunned an Azeri elementary school. Fortunately, the concrete walls of the school kept the children safe. Yet, there are still members of Congress who want to give tens of millions of dollars of American taxpayer's money to Armenia for "Assistance."

In the Caucasus, there is a saying that "The People Vote With Their Feet." In the past few years, Azerbaijan has experienced population growth in the range of 10%, almost entirely from immigration. The largest components of the immigrating populations come from Turkey, Georgia, and China. Clearly, those in the region feel that Azerbaijan offers the best opportunities for good jobs, security, and the opportunity to raise a family in safety and security. Armenia, on the other hand, is experiencing heavy emigration out of the country and the occupied territories. For instance, Nagorno-Karabakh, an autonomous province of Azerbaijan, now occupied by

Armenia, which had a population of 185,000 in the early 1990's, now has an estimated population of between 25,000 and 35,000. On March 19 last year, an Armenian newspaper reported; **"The Number of those that left Armenia grows by over 56 percent!"** The article goes on: *March 19, 2013, 0825: YEREVAN. – In line with the official data issued by the Armenian State Migration Service, the negative difference between those that departed from Armenia and those that arrived in the country in January – February 2013 is 22,122.* The voting with feet continues at a high rate.

Azerbaijan and Israel continue to strengthen their friendship. About 30% of Israel's needed oil and gas products come from Azerbaijan, and Azerbaijan buys military equipment from Israel.

Comparison with Ukraine:

The leadership of Azerbaijan is watching closely the events surrounding the Russian incursions into Ukraine. They see many parallels between the invasion of Ukraine and the invasion by Armenia into Azerbaijan with the continuing conflict surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh. Regarding Ukraine, the United States Congress, as well as U.S. leading figures, including President Barack Obama, have been vocal and active in condemning this breach of international laws. NATO and the European Union, and Members of Congress, have voiced strong and powerful criticisms of Russia. On March 15, 2014, the United Nations Security Council tried to pass a Resolution on Ukraine. Both the United States and the EU have adopted sanctions as well as other actions against Russia. All these actions show the clear support of America and Europe for the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Azerbaijan has had almost 1/5 of its territory under occupation for 24 years now by Armenian soldiers, who control and do as they please in Nagorno-Karabakh and 7 (seven) surrounding regions of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan has suffered under this occupation, with over one million refugees and internally displaced persons, and hundreds of thousands of others affected. There are several United Nations Resolutions which have been passed (UNSC 822, 853, 874 and 887/1993), as well as a number of statements from the U.S. Congress, OSCE, EU and Council of Europe, all supporting the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. The United States government, under both Democratic and Republican administrations, has always supported the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Yet the government persists in providing assistance to Armenia worth tens of millions of dollars each year that only serves to reward Armenia's well-documented aggression. Rather than providing aid, Congress should act consistently and cut off aggressor states, whether they be the Russian Federation or Armenia, from U.S. assistance and deploy wide ranging sanctions against such states that will deter further efforts to change legally recognized boundaries through the use of force.

An example of an impending humanitarian catastrophe due to the Armenian occupation is the four hundred thousand people facing disaster due to Armenian occupation of the Sarsang Water Reservoir, polluting arable lands, depriving people of water, with the reservoir's dam showing clear signs of impending rupture and flooding.

The U.S. Congress should recognize that Nagorno-Karabakh is not a frozen conflict, but a dangerous source of instability for the whole South Caucasus and an occupied territory, where shots are fired by Armenian snipers daily and where military action by Armenia is a constant threat, including against the Sarsang Reservoir and the 400,000 people downstream of the Sarsang dam. The United States needs to provide consistent and predictable support to critical allies like Azerbaijan. If we want to deter Russian aggression in Ukraine, we need a consistent message that international borders cannot be unilaterally changed by force, whether it be in Azerbaijan or Ukraine. Failure to do so only encourages more aggression.

In summary, a considerable part of Azerbaijani territory continues under occupation. The country lives with a blockaded region, Nakhchivan, containing 410 thousand people. 450 thousand people in 6 (six) occupied regions, and almost 1 (one) million internally displaced Azerbaijani people live under difficult social and economic conditions, being deprived of all their rights due to the Armenian aggression. The lives of 400,000 people are threatened due to the blockade and occupation of the Sarsang Reservoir. Faced with the continuing threat of Armenian aggression, Azerbaijan now needs U.S. action and help more than ever.

The United States should provide the same level of support to Azerbaijan as Ukraine. They feel that this is not an unreasonable expectation.

Some Positive Suggestions:

- 1) In the past, humanitarian assistance to occupied Nagorno-Karabakh has been distributed through the United States Embassy in Yerevan. This has sent the wrong message to Armenian interests, signaling that the United States supports the Armenian occupation, which it does not. This assistance should be distributed and managed through the United States Embassy in Baku. Aid should also be provided to help the Azerbaijani refugees from the Nagorno-Karabakh war.
- 2) Eliminate Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act. This Section is bad policy and should be permanently revoked. It is insulting to Azerbaijan, our strongest ally in the region. It inhibits a strong, deep relationship. Azerbaijan is 83% of the Caucasus economy, and Section 907 restricts U.S. trade with them while Russia is trying to be closer to them. It was passed in 1993 in the Congress through the strong lobbying efforts of Mourad Topalian, an Armenian criminal who was later convicted of terrorism and served 6 years in the American Federal prison system. There is no benefit to this trade restricting, terrorist-inspired law.
- 3) Encourage the enforcement of the UN Resolutions calling for Armenia to remove its forces and stop the occupation of 20% of Azerbaijan.
- 4) Urge the State Department and the Minsk Group to resolve the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh through a referendum that includes all the people from Nagorno-Karabakh who are now living as refugees within Azerbaijan.
- 5) Direct USAID to provide funding to Azerbaijan to examine and maintain the Sarsang Reservoir.

The condition of the Sarsang dam is considered to be in disrepair. Should it fail, it will threaten the lives and livelihoods of some 400,000 people in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

I thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

STATEMENT OF NATASHA F. BILIMORIA
DIRECTOR, U.S. STRATEGY
THE GAVI ALLIANCE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C.

APRIL 4, 2014

Madame Chairwoman,

The GAVI Alliance (GAVI) welcomes the opportunity to submit testimony for the record to the House State, Foreign Operations Subcommittee regarding expanding the life-saving work of vaccines in the world's poorest countries. **I respectfully urge the Committee to provide \$200 million for fiscal year 2015 for the U.S. contribution to the GAVI Alliance and strong funding for the Maternal and Child Health account through the U.S. Agency for International Development's Global Health account.**

I would like to thank you, Congresswoman Lowey, and the Subcommittee for its historically strong support of the GAVI Alliance. The Committee's fiscal year 2014 funding level for GAVI and for global health programs as a whole was a particularly strong message on strengthening this work and the U.S.'s commitment to saving the lives of children and vulnerable populations in the developing world.

GAVI has had a tremendous impact on saving lives and providing an entire generation a real chance of a healthy and productive life. And in the future, with expanded U.S. support, GAVI can do so much more.

THE GAVI ALLIANCE'S MISSION AND IMPACT

Immunization is recognized as one of the most efficient, successful and cost-effective health investments in history. Yet each year, 22 million children - many of them in the poorest and most remote communities - do not have access to the most basic vaccines. One in five of all children who die before the age of five lose their lives to vaccine-preventable diseases. The overwhelming majority of these deaths occur in poor countries.

In 2000, GAVI was launched as an innovative public-private partnership to fund new and underused vaccines for children in the world's poorest countries. Our mission is to save children's lives and protect people's health by increasing access to immunization in the world's poorest countries - where 85% of the world's unvaccinated children live.

The GAVI Alliance brings together the United States and other donor governments, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and other private sector partners, developing country governments, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the World Bank, the vaccine industry and civil society to reach goals no single country or organization could achieve on its own.

From 2000 to 2013, with support from the United States and other donors, the GAVI Alliance has provided funding to immunize more than 440 million children and prevented six million deaths. The work of the partnership has helped deliver vaccines to some of the poorest and most remote areas and helped bring immunization rates there to an all-time high.

Despite a challenging financial climate, developing countries are on track to immunize an additional 243 million children with GAVI support between 2011 and 2015, preventing close to four million future deaths. This includes vaccines against pneumococcal disease and rotavirus--the primary causes of the two biggest killers of children under age five in developing countries: pneumonia and diarrhea.

The introduction of these new vaccines has already protected millions of children. Specifically, by end of 2012, GAVI support had contributed to immunizing 11 million children against pneumococcal disease and 4 million against rotavirus. In addition, GAVI has also helped strengthen health systems, immunization services and has increased injection safety in more than 70 countries.

GAVI: AN INNOVATIVE PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

The GAVI Alliance is a lean and efficient operation where overhead represents less than five percent of our total budget. The bulk of funding goes directly toward the purchase of life-saving vaccines and improving the systems used to transport, store and administer them safely, even in the most remote regions.

GAVI represents an innovative model of development cooperation that brings various partners together within a focused and efficient enterprise to develop long-lasting solutions to a critical development challenge. The GAVI model is based on strong relationships with partner countries, Alliance partners – including the private sector – as well as bilateral donors that can provide critical assistance at country level.

In particular, the private sector has become an important partner in this cause. There is a growing corporate awareness that the world's biggest health challenges – including how to reach the 22 million children who go unvaccinated each year – also have profound economic implications.

Vaccine-preventable diseases, such as pneumonia, measles and deadly diarrhea, take an enormous toll on people in developing countries. Companies recognize that their competitiveness and the health of communities where they do business are mutually dependent.

Businesses have invested in GAVI because they know that one of the strongest ways to promote global health is through immunization. And quite simply, vaccines provide a strong

return on investment. Through collaboration between the public and private sector, GAVI has been able to raise additional funds and, most importantly, bring significant private sector expertise, skills, advocacy and visibility to its work.

Other key features of the GAVI model include vaccine co-financing by all recipient countries and vaccine market-shaping mechanisms that have increased the supply of vaccines while also significantly reducing prices.

CO-FINANCING AND GRADUATION

GAVI funding is catalytic. Country ownership is an inherent part of GAVI's model and therefore countries share the responsibility of vaccinating their children.

All GAVI-eligible countries are required to contribute financially toward the cost of their vaccines. Even the poorest countries co-finance a small portion of every dose of vaccine purchased by GAVI. GAVI-eligible countries span a large income range, reflecting varying abilities in public health spending and ability to assume new vaccine financing. The amount of the co-financing contribution is based on each country's gross national income, with countries divided into low-income, intermediate and "graduating" groups.

GAVI's co-financing policy requires countries with higher incomes to finance a greater share of their vaccine costs. As they grow wealthier, they are eased into a graduation process from GAVI support and take on the full cost of vaccines after 5 years. In 2011, more than 60 countries were co-financing new and underused vaccines funded by GAVI; and by 2020, 18 countries are set to graduate. This further strengthens the long-term sustainability of GAVI's immunization programs in the developing world.

Through co-financing and graduation, recipient countries show their strong commitment to improving the health of their populations and work toward creating a more financially sustainable model for national vaccine programs.

SHAPING VACCINE MARKETS

Market forces alone do not ensure the most favorable conditions for low income countries. Vaccines manufacturing is a complex and long term process and requires greater time and investment in research and development than medicines. This may result in fewer producers, high barriers for new entrants, poor supply reliability, and slow price decreases.

Through its public-private partnership, GAVI plays a unique and strategic role in addressing some of these market failures by increasing the certainty of demand and applying critical market shaping tools to benefit poor countries. The key goal is to ensure that a sustainable quantity of appropriate quality vaccines is available through a diverse supplier base at an affordable price.

GAVI's market shaping activity is guided by a vaccine supply and procurement strategy which includes a tailored approach for each vaccine. The aim is to accelerate efforts to stimulate

security of supply, competition and the entry of new manufacturers in both the developed and developing world, and to foster an environment for quality and innovation.

GAVI, the vaccine industry and its partners, including UNICEF which manages most of the vaccine procurement, have been increasing market certainty since 2000. By pooling demand from eligible countries, GAVI financing has provided a reliable market for low cost vaccines, sped up the delivery of life-saving vaccines to developing countries, and attracted new manufacturers, including several in developing countries and emerging markets.

In order to sustain immunization programs in countries that graduate from GAVI support, it is important to provide continued access to low vaccine prices. GAVI has secured commitments from manufacturers to provide access to low pricing for graduated countries for key vaccines supported by GAVI. GAVI and its partners will continue efforts to ensure affordable prices for graduating countries and are also exploring ways to facilitate access to more affordable vaccines among other lower middle income countries.

SAVING MORE LIVES—WE CAN DO MORE

GAVI is well positioned to save and improve even more lives with support from the US and other donors. This is a critical year and the \$200 million request for Fiscal Year 2015 will ensure programs, such as immunization to prevent pneumonia, can continue at the country level and that GAVI does not run the risk of being unable to approve new vaccine programs in the future. We look to build on recent momentum in immunization, making the benefits of vaccines in poor countries permanent for the next generation.

We are also entering into our next strategic cycle and second replenishment period, running from 2016-2020. It is an important time to create a strong base of support and bold new donor commitments. These additional funds will allow us to create and implement strategic vaccine investments to save millions of more lives and work toward tens of billions of dollars in economic benefits for poor countries. With additional funds, we can greatly expand our impact, reaching the poorest and most vulnerable children in the hardest to reach places.

We cannot become complacent and must build on the momentum we have achieved in recent years. If not, there is a serious risk of backtracking on the gains we have already achieved.

CONCLUSION

I want to thank this Committee for its long-standing support of the GAVI Alliance and for its commitment to programs for maternal and child health. GAVI and its partners realize the significant fiscal challenges faced by the U.S. and other donor countries, and we are working hard to ensure the best-possible stewardship and accountability related to these resources.

I respectfully request that the Committee provide \$200 million for the fiscal year 2015 U.S. contribution to the GAVI Alliance and support strong funding for the fiscal year 2015 Maternal and Child Health account. Thank you for your consideration.



Kiwanis®

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**STATEMENT BY
LANCE INCITTI, KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION PRESIDENT
KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS,
AND RELATED PROGRAMS
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

APRIL 4, 2014

Madam Chairwoman, I am Lance Incitti, the 2013-14 President of the Kiwanis International Foundation, a volunteer leadership position. I live in Denville, New Jersey; it is a pleasure to submit testimony for the record to the Subcommittee on behalf of more than 5,100 Kiwanis clubs and more than 432,000 Kiwanis-family members in the United States. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of *The Eliminate Project: Kiwanis eliminating maternal and neonatal tetanus* (MNT). Tetanus is a preventable disease that kills one baby every nine minutes. We are seeking the support of this Committee to encourage USAID to provide, through UNICEF, funding to eliminate maternal and neonatal tetanus. This funding would come from the U.S. Agency for International Development's Global Health account. We are also seeking your support to provide \$800 million in fiscal year 2015 for the overall account for Maternal and Child Health.

We have made progress during the last year in working toward a partnership with USAID on their role in The Eliminate Project. The participation by the United States through USAID is very important to the success of eliminating MNT.

On behalf of Kiwanis International and Kiwanis International Foundation, I want to thank you for your past and continuing support of our first Global Campaign for Children, ending Iodine Deficiency Disorders. I urge you to also support our second and current campaign to eliminate maternal and neonatal tetanus from the face of the earth.

MATERNAL AND NEONATAL TETANUS & THE ELIMINATE PROJECT

The Eliminate Project: Kiwanis eliminating maternal and neonatal tetanus is a global campaign that will save or protect more than 61 million mothers and newborns. Tetanus can infect newborns, spreading quickly, causing terrible pain and killing within days. It is a terrible disease

where mothers cannot even touch or comfort their babies due to the excruciating pain. But it is highly preventable.

During this project, Kiwanis International is focusing where the need is greatest on the populations least served. In fact, we are tackling the hardest leg of a difficult journey. MNT is on the brink of elimination, but needs a champion to complete the work.

Kiwanis International is committed to raising \$110 million to immunize more than 61 million women in countries where the disease is still a major health problem. Kiwanis' global volunteer network and strength in reaching communities and leaders, along with the UNICEF's field staff, technical expertise and unbeatable supply chain, will help eliminate this cruel, centuries-old disease.

We believe we have a very effective partnership with UNICEF and urge you to support UNICEF in its request for funding in the amount of \$132 million for fiscal year 2015.

MATERNAL AND NEONATAL TETANUS

MNT results when tetanus spores, which are present in soil everywhere, enter the bloodstream. It is mainly caused by a lack of access to sanitary birthing conditions, unclean instruments used to cut the umbilical cord and unclean post-partum cord care.

Once the disease is contracted, a new-born usually dies within seven days. The fatality rate can be as high as 100 percent in underserved areas.

Most mothers and newborns who die of tetanus live in areas of Africa, and South and Southeast Asia, where many women are poor, have little access to health care, have limited information about safe delivery procedures and continue harmful cord care practices.

MNT is easily prevented by giving women of childbearing age a series of three vaccine doses, which costs roughly \$1.80. This cost includes the vaccinations, syringes, safe storage, transportation and more.

Women who are properly vaccinated with the tetanus vaccine will have immunity through most of their childbearing years. Babies born to mothers who have been vaccinated will be protected through the first two months of life.

When women are vaccinated for tetanus and learn about maternal health, they become empowered to take control of their well-being and that of their newborns. We believe these women matter, they deserve to give birth to healthy babies, and their babies deserve to achieve their full human potential.

PROGRESS

The Eliminate Project supports UNICEF and its partners, which have already eliminated MNT in 34 countries. Twenty-five countries remain at risk, with more than 61 million women who need to be vaccinated.

Between 1999 and 2010, nearly 100 million women in some of the most remote places were protected against tetanus, saving thousands of newborns from death due to tetanus every year.

Since launching our fundraising campaign July 2011, more than \$50 million has been raised for MNT, more than 6,000 Kiwanis members have committed to multiple years of volunteer service, and more than 5,000 clubs have contributed to the fundraising campaign.

I can visualize a world without tetanus. I was honored in 1997 to be a part of a site visit to Pakistan, to see UNICEF in action as they worked to eliminate Iodine Deficiency Disorder through the encouragement of the use of iodized salt.

I noted with pride at that time, when the political leaders of the community we were visiting declared that henceforth only iodized salt would be used in their community, that I was a part of saving 2.5 million people.

Now, with The Eliminate Project and my upcoming site visit to Haiti, I know I am a part of saving 61 million women and their future children, as the MNT immunization protects them and their babies during their childbearing years.

CONCLUSION

The maternal neonatal tetanus elimination plans are in place. Countries are ready for implementation. All that remains is one final funding push. One push to rid the earth of this devastating disease.

Madam Chairwoman, I ask you to join us in this final push. Help us to eliminate this terrible disease and ensure that no baby suffers this excruciating seven-day death ever again.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.

**Global Health Technologies Coalition Outside Witness Testimony for the Record
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs
Appropriations Committee
US House of Representatives**

April 4, 2014

Kaitlin Christenson, Coalition Director, Global Health Technologies Coalition

**US Agency for International Development Global Health Programs FY 2015
Appropriations**

Chairman Granger, Ranking Member Lowey, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the fiscal year (FY) 2015 appropriations funding for the US Agency for International Development (USAID). We appreciate your leadership in global health, and we hope that your support will continue. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Global Health Technologies Coalition (GHTC), a group of nearly 30 nonprofit organizations working together to advance US policies that can accelerate the development of new global health innovations—including new vaccines, drugs, diagnostics, microbicides, multi-purpose prevention technologies, and other tools—to combat global health diseases and conditions. The GHTC members strongly believe that to meet the world's most pressing global health needs, it is critical to invest in research today so that the most effective health solutions are available now and in the future. We also believe that the US government has a historic and unique role in doing so. My testimony reflects the needs expressed by our member organizations, which include nonprofit advocacy organizations, policy think-tanks, implementing organizations, product development partnerships (PDPs), and many others.¹ **We strongly urge the Committee to continue its established support for global health research and development (R&D) by (1) sustaining and supporting US investment in global health research and product development and funding the Global Health Programs account under the State Department and USAID at \$ 10.357 billion, and to fully fund each disease or population-specific program under this account, (2) instructing USAID—in collaboration with other agencies involved in global health—to prioritize R&D within each of the disease and condition areas under USAID's Global Health Programs account, and (3) requiring leaders at the State Department and the USAID to join leaders of other US agencies to develop a cross-US government global health R&D strategy to ensure that US investments in global health research are efficient, coordinated, and streamlined.**

Critical need for new global health tools

Every day, more than 35,000 people die from AIDS, tuberculosis (TB), malaria, and other neglected diseases around the world. For example, in the African region, maternal, newborn, and child mortality—along with a broad array of vaccine-preventable and other communicable diseases—remain urgent concerns. The health detriments these diseases cause, even when not fatal, have profound impacts on other areas such as economic stability and access to education. These issues highlight the urgent need for sustained investment in global health research to deliver new tools to combat these devastating diseases. Where drugs and other health technologies exist for these diseases, many have grown ineffective due to increasing drug

¹ Global Health Technologies Coalition. <http://www.ghtcoalition.org/coalition-members.php>.

resistance and toxicity or are costly and difficult to administer in poor, remote, and unstable settings. In other cases, the needed tools to prevent, diagnose, and treat these diseases simply do not exist. While we must increase access to proven, existing drugs, vaccines, diagnostics, and other health tools to tackle global health problems, it is just as critical to develop the next generation of tools to fight existing disease and address emerging threats. Today's investments in global health innovations to prevent and treat diseases in the developing world such as extensively drug-resistant TB (XDR-TB), malaria, and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) will mean millions of future lives saved. USAID plays a unique role in this process by funding late-stage research and product development appropriate for the low-resources settings where they will be used. There are several very promising technology candidates in the R&D pipeline; however, these tools will never be available if the support needed to continue R&D is not supported and sustained.

Leveraging the US capacity for innovation

US investment in global health R&D has generated great success in treating devastating diseases and improving the lives of millions through new technologies. One of USAID's comparative advantages is that it can play a unique role in R&D by funding late-stage research and product development appropriate for the low-resource settings where they will be used. In addition, USAID has a global presence, and a unique understanding of the needs of patients in different settings and contexts. We applaud the efforts that USAID has made in fostering innovation in health technologies, including:

- Collaborating with private-sector partners across the country and around the world. Through PDPs—a unique form of public-private partnership designed to develop and introduce new tools for neglected diseases—USAID supports research to improve health conditions around the world. One success of this collaborative model has been the development of a low-cost meningitis vaccine, specifically designed for the millions of people in African countries who are at risk for this deadly disease each year. This vaccine is having real world life-saving implications, and to date, more than 151 million people have been vaccinated since introduction in 2010.
- Another example of USAID growing partnerships is its coordination with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Grand Challenges Canada, the government of Norway and others through the Saving Lives at Birth research program, focused on developing life-saving innovations for mothers and newborns.
- Supporting research to develop safe, effective, accessible, and acceptable tools for use in the developing world to prevent HIV—including microbicides based on antiretroviral drugs, which have shown the potential to prevent HIV infection in women, and HIV vaccines.
- Funding the development of new anti-malaria treatments, including Tafenoquine, a drug candidate that may be able to prevent infection of the *p. vivax* malaria strain.

- Playing a key role in the global effort to fight TB by supporting research to develop new therapeutics, and providing expertise on implementation and scale-up of the products that are ultimately licensed.
- Supporting the development of creative strategies and tools to deliver medicines to those who need them.
- Supporting research to develop new contraception technologies, including multi-purpose technologies.

Past US investments contributed to such breakthroughs as the MenAfriVac[®] meningitis A vaccine, which has already saved thousands of lives and will save an estimated \$570 million in the next decade; and the distribution of more than 200 million courses of the child-friendly malaria drug Coartem[®] Dispersible, which is estimated to have saved 340,000 young lives from malaria between 2009 and 2013.

The United States continues to be at the forefront of innovation in global health technology development and the US government is involved in 200 of the 365 global health products currently in the pipeline. USAID has made great strides in fostering innovation in health technologies; some examples include supporting research to develop safe, effective, accessible, and acceptable tools for use in the developing world to prevent HIV—including microbicides based on antiretroviral drugs, which have shown the potential to prevent HIV infection in women, and HIV vaccines. The potential impact of this research is enormous. For example, at current rates of HIV infection, a vaccine with just 50 percent efficacy has the potential to prevent one million HIV infections every year. Additionally, USAID continues to play a key role in the global effort to fight TB by supporting research to develop new therapeutics, and providing expertise on implementation and scale-up of the products that are ultimately licensed. Continued research in this area is greatly needed as a new shortened treatment course for TB could reduce transmission by 10 percent by 2050, preventing eight million infections and two million deaths in Southeast Asia alone.

In addition to USAID, much of the support from the US government for global health R&D comes from federal agencies such as Department of Defense (DoD), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the National Institutes for Health (NIH), and USAID. These agencies demonstrate a continued commitment to innovation for global health products. Each of these US agencies play a unique and essential role in moving new global health technologies from concept to reality, and must partner with each other in order to achieve success. Beyond inter-agency collaboration, public-private partnerships are also essential. One method of USAID-supported collaboration with the private sector is through PDPs. While PDPs operate differently depending on their disease and product area(s) of focus, they typically employ a portfolio approach to R&D to accelerate product development by pursuing multiple strategies for the same disease area. They also work in close partnership with academia, large pharmaceutical companies, the biotechnology industry, and with regulatory and other government agencies in developing countries.

PDPs are delivering on their promise to develop lifesaving products for use in countries where disease burdens are highest and no viable commercial markets exist. To date, PDPs have developed and licensed nineteen products to combat neglected diseases in low- and middle-income countries. More can be expected from PDPs in the future with sustained and additional support: in 2012 PDPs had more than 374 biopharmaceutical, diagnostic, and vector-control candidates in various stages of development, including 23 in late-stage clinical trials. In the next five years, it is anticipated that several new technologies could be ready for use or in final stages of clinical development.

USAID has been an important partner in product development for global health, and must continue its role. The agency's release of a five-year strategy for health-related research was a welcome sign of the agency's prioritization of science, technology, and innovation. However, there are areas of USAID's global health portfolio where additional research is needed. For instance, USAID currently does not fund research into new tools for NTDs, TB vaccines, and many areas of family planning, maternal, and child health. USAID deserves to be commended for its efforts to provide treatments for five of the highly prevalent NTDs in the developing world. To make additional progress against NTDs, USAID should implement and carry out a R&D strategy for NTDs to ensure that new tools are available to treat all NTDs, especially those NTDs with the highest death rates for which current treatments are inadequate.

Innovation as a smart economic choice

Global health R&D brings lifesaving tools to those who need them most; however, the benefits are much broader than preventing and treating disease. It is also a smart economic investment in the United States, where it drives job creation, spurs business activity, engages academic institutions, and benefits the health of American citizens. Sixty-four cents of every US dollar invested in global health R&D benefits US based researchers, many of which conduct their research at US universities. As just one example of the many states positively impacted by global health R&D, the bioscience and life sciences industries in New York employ 80,000 people in the state, many of which are global health researchers. Not only is this research beneficial at home economically, global health research benefits the health of Americans too. For example, both dengue and Chagas disease have made resurgences in some states, and malaria and TB cases are on the rise as the world becomes more interconnected by international travel. In today's globalized world, the health of Americans is interdependent with the health of populations abroad.

Recommendations

Support for global health research that saves lives around the world—while at the same time promoting innovation, creating jobs, and spurring economic growth at home—is unquestionably among the nation's highest priorities. In keeping with this value, the GHTC respectfully requests that the Committee do the following:

1. Sustain and support US investments in global health research and product development. As there is no specific line item in the federal budget that dictates funding levels for global health R&D, it is important to protect the US investment in the entire Global Health Programs

account of the USAID budget, as well as fully fund each disease-specific account, while also honoring US commitments to multilateral global health programs.

2. USAID should include research for new technologies to improve health in each of its global health programs, including R&D for new tools to fight NTDs, vaccines for TB, and innovations that support maternal, child, and family planning. We ask Congress to fund the Global Health Programs account under the State Department and USAID at \$10.357 billion. We ask that this support not come at the expense of robust funding for the entire set of poverty-focused humanitarian and development accounts within the State and Foreign Operations budget.

3. Request that leaders at the State Department and USAID work with leaders at other US agencies, including the NIH, CDC, the FDA, the DoD, and the Office of the US Global AIDS Coordinator (OGAC) to develop a cross-US government global health R&D strategy to ensure that US investments in global health research are efficient, coordinated, and streamlined. The results of these initiatives should be reported on to Congress and be made publicly available. We are pleased that USAID has released a new strategy on health-related research, and request that regular reports on the progress of said strategy be available to Congress and the public. We ask that these reports include information on all US government agencies involved in global health R&D, including all R&D at USAID.

On behalf of the members of the GHTC, I would like to extend my gratitude to the Committee for the opportunity to testify.

**ALICE ALBRIGHT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS,
AND RELATED PROGRAMS
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

APRIL 4, 2014

Madam Chairwoman and members of the Subcommittee, I appreciate this opportunity to submit testimony regarding the challenge to ensure that children in the world's poorest countries have access to a quality basic education and how the Global Partnership for Education addresses that challenge. I respectfully ask the Subcommittee to provide at least \$50 million, under the United States Agency for International Development's Development Assistance account, as the U.S. Government's fiscal year 2015 contribution to the Global Partnership for Education. I also request that the Committee provide at least \$800 million from various accounts in the bill for overall basic education funding.

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is the leading public-private partnership of governments, international organizations, civil society, teachers' organizations, the private sector and foundations dedicated to ensuring that every child is able to attain a quality basic education.

The GPE finances the development and implementation of good quality education sector plans in almost 60 developing partner countries and leverages considerable domestic budgetary resources allocated by these countries.

The Global Partnership for Education has four strategic goals:

- Access to a quality basic education for all children;
- Ensuring that girls have equal access to a basic education and that resources are focused on children living in fragile and conflict-affected states;
- All children master basic literacy and numeracy skills; and
- Strong national education systems are developed that can deliver a quality basic education.

THE CHALLENGE

The number of out of school children has been reduced from 110 million in 2002 to approximately 57 million children in 2013. However, these remaining millions of children continue to be denied the right to a basic education; almost half of whom will probably never enter a classroom.

Although millions of children now in school are learning to read, write and do math, over 250 million children leave primary school after 4 years without basic literacy or numeracy skills,

further denying them the opportunity to achieve their potential in life. The majority of out of school children reside in fragile and conflict affected states.

INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION PAYS OFF

We encourage the United States and other donor governments to increase their investment in basic education, which is the bedrock of economic and social development.

If all students in low income countries completed school with basic reading skills, 171 million people could be lifted out of poverty. This would represent a 12 percent reduction in global poverty. Second, each additional year of schooling raises a country's average annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth by .37 percent. Third, investing in education for girls could boost sub-Saharan Africa's agricultural output by as much as 25 percent.

Education also has been identified as one of the key factors or conditions for determining the prospect of peace within societies. Across society, every year of schooling decreases the chance of a young person engaging in violent conflict by 20 percent and enhances competitiveness in the labor market.

I have visited six partner countries since my appointment slightly more than one year ago as CEO of the Global Partnership for Education. Four of these countries are fragile and conflict affected states: Afghanistan, Pakistan, South Sudan and the DR Congo. Millions of young people living in these countries, which have experienced decades of armed conflict, have missed out on their one chance to receive a basic education.

GPE and its partners are working with these governments, civil society, donors such as USAID, and the private sector and foundations to bring children into the classroom and ensure that they learn how to read, write and manage numeracy.

GPE OBJECTIVES AND FUNDING MODEL TO MEET THESE CHALLENGES

The Global Partnership for Education has established specific outcomes for the 2015-2018 timeframe that can be reached, if resources are available, in approximately 66 GPE eligible countries:

- Twenty-nine million children in both primary and lower secondary schools will be supported over four years for a good quality education, 23 million of which will be in fragile and conflict affected states.
- The number of children who do not complete primary education will decrease from 7.6 million in 2014 to 4.8 million in 2018.
- The primary completion rate of girls will increase from 74 per cent in 2014 to 84 percent in 2018.
- The number of children who complete primary education annually and demonstrate core reading and numeracy skills will increase by 25 percent, from 16 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2018.

- Leverage an additional \$16 billion in developing country partners' domestic education expenditures.

NEW GPE MODEL

The Board of the Global Partnership for Education has recently approved a new model for meeting the challenges of providing a primary education for all:

- Funding eligibility based fully on need;
- Better performance incentivized through all GPE grants;
- Importance of country ownership emphasized;
- Increased efficiency and effectiveness of education systems that target equity, quality and access; and
- More and better data to increase accountability and improve the effectiveness of education outcomes.

U.S. SUPPORT TO GPE MAKES A MEASURABLE DIFFERENCE IN IMPROVING CHILDREN'S LIVES

The United States Agency for International Development is a key GPE partner and makes direct contributions to the Global Partnership for Education for country support and technical assistance. Support from the United States and other donors is important to increasing access to primary education, improving learning outcomes, improving the quality of education sector plans, strengthening collaboration in the education sector, and improving progress in conflict affected and fragile states.

In addition, US investments in GPE enhance the effectiveness of its bilateral assistance to countries by ensuring that all bilateral support is aligned in furtherance of a single multi-year education sector plan.

FISCAL YEAR 2015 UNITED STATES SUPPORT FOR THE GPE AND BASIC EDUCATION

Madam Chairwoman, I urge the Committee to provide a fiscal year 2015 U.S. contribution to the Global Partnership for Education of \$50 million. I also urge you to support an overall level for basic education of \$800 million. This level of support for the Global Partnership for Education and basic education will truly change the lives of children around the world.

Thank you for your consideration.

**STATEMENT BY
JENNIFER A. BUDA, TRUSTEE
HELEN KELLER INTERNATIONAL**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS,
AND RELATED PROGRAMS
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

APRIL 4, 2014

Madam Chairwoman,

I am Jennifer A. Buda, a volunteer member of the Board of Trustees of Helen Keller International, and it is a pleasure to testify for the record for the Committee. I urge the Committee to recommend in fiscal year 2015 at least \$3.0 million for blind children; \$100 million for Neglected Tropical Diseases; at least \$23 million for vitamin A; and \$200 million for nutrition in the U.S. Agency for International Development's Global Health and Development accounts. I also urge you to support \$800 million for Maternal and Child Health.

Headquartered in the United States, Helen Keller International (HKI) currently offers programs in 21 countries in Africa and Asia as well as the United States. Co-founded in 1915 by the deaf-blind crusader Helen Keller, HKI is a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing blindness and reducing malnutrition worldwide. Our programs serve tens of millions of vulnerable people each year. But the need to do more is still great.

BLIND CHILDREN

One child goes blind every minute. According to the World Health Organization, 1.5 million children are blind and almost 19 million children suffer from low vision and uncorrected refractive errors.

Throughout their lives, blind children in developing countries must depend completely upon their families and government health systems. They are often neglected and rarely receive opportunities to attend school or develop the skills needed to become productive members of society. For the vast majority of these children, their blindness is avoidable. HKI uses cost-effective, proven strategies to prevent and treat vision loss in children. Many children can be helped through simple and inexpensive operations and vision correction. This House Subcommittee has consistently supported a program for blind children in developing countries. In partnership with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the program has helped to save the sight of hundreds of thousands of children. I urge the Subcommittee to continue the Blind Children funding at a level of at least \$3.0 million for fiscal year 2015.

VITAMIN A DEFICIENCY

Vitamin A is essential for growth, eye health, cognitive development and immune system function. It is a key determinant of maternal and child survival. It is estimated that between 34-42% of children under five in Africa and Asia suffer from vitamin A deficiency (VAD), putting hundreds of millions of them at a greatly increased risk of disease and death. In addition, according to the World Health Organization, between 250,000 to 500,000 children will become blind each year due to vitamin A deficiency, making it the leading cause of childhood blindness. Providing vitamin A to children between six months and five years of age reduces mortality by an average of 23% overall, and helps prevent disease, visual impairment and blindness.

HKI's programs to address vitamin A deficiency are known for their efficiency and success in reaching large numbers of children. With the past support of USAID, HKI has become a recognized leader in distributing vitamin A capsules to children in countries across the world.

Vitamin A supplementation is considered one of the world's most cost-effective public health interventions. At a cost of approximately \$1 per child per year, it takes just two high-dosage vitamin A capsules to prevent vitamin A-related blindness and improve a child's chance of survival. I urge the Subcommittee to provide at least \$23 million for vitamin A for fiscal year 2015.

NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES

Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) blind, disfigure, disable, stigmatize and can kill, trapping the more than one billion people in a cycle of poverty and disease. Research has shown that eliminating NTDs can allow millions to climb out of poverty, particularly by increasing access to education and improving economic performance.

The USAID Neglected Tropical Diseases program has already made possible the treatment of more than 250 million people worldwide as part of large scale disease control and elimination programs. Through USAID programs and the generous support of the pharmaceutical manufacturers who have donated their products to NTD programs, more than 580 million NTD treatments have been disseminated in 24 countries since 2007. Generous donations have come from GlaxoSmithKline, Merck and Pfizer. The US has become the global leader by taking the lead in increasing access to medicines to treat the most common NTDs. HKI supports addressing all of the diseases in the current targeted program for NTDs, through existing grant mechanisms.

For decades, HKI has been a recognized leader in addressing blinding trachoma and onchocerciasis. Globally, trachoma – which is the leading cause of preventable blindness – has left over 1.2 million people irreversibly blind and many more in need of treatment. HKI supports the provision of sightsaving surgeries for thousands of individuals suffering from trichiasis (the blinding phase of the disease) in Africa and works with its local partners to consistently improve surgical quality and patient outcomes.

Intestinal worms are estimated to infect two billion people worldwide, causing chronic, disabling and often disfiguring diseases that lead to a downward cycle of poverty and deprivation. Since school children bear the highest infection loads, HKI implements school-based de-worming programs that have an enormous positive impact on the community. I urge the Subcommittee to continue the United States' leadership in Neglected Tropical Diseases control during fiscal year 2015 by supporting continued funding of at least \$100 million.

NUTRITION

Globally, undernutrition continues to remain a major public health problem. It is estimated that 165 million children under the age of five suffer from stunting, 52 million from wasting and 273 million from anemia. Many women in developing countries are also affected by undernutrition; for example, anemia affects about 29% of non-pregnant and 38% of pregnant women, or 32 million and 496 million women, respectively. HKI supports the continuation and expansion of nutrition programs to support infants, young children and women of reproductive age and asks that the Subcommittee recommend \$200 million under the Nutrition-specific account within global health programs for fiscal year 2015.

HIV/AIDS, MICRONUTRIENTS AND NUTRITION

There is clear evidence that lack of nutritious food for individuals with HIV/AIDS diminishes the effectiveness of prevention, care and treatment strategies. Adequate nutrition – food with essential vitamins and minerals – is a key component of care and treatment of people with HIV/AIDS. HKI has demonstrated that its Homestead Food Production program can be tailored to meet the nutritional needs of people living with HIV/AIDS. Based on this evidence, I urge the committee to support the use of HIV/AIDS accounts for programs that address the development and implementation of nutrition support, guidelines and care services for people living with HIV/AIDS.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

Investments in food security and agriculture programs that explicitly focus on improving nutrition in vulnerable populations through access to nutritious foods can produce long term gains in child survival and health. These investments also provide income enhancement, poverty reduction and broad-based economic growth. I urge the Subcommittee to support a food security and agricultural strategy which includes improvements in nutrition as a central objective with measurable outcomes and puts the focus on supporting smallholder families, particularly women farmers and other vulnerable populations.

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Maternal and child undernutrition is an underlying cause in nearly half of child deaths, and continues to be a cause and consequence of diseases and disability in the children who survive. I urge the Subcommittee to recommend funding of at least \$800 million for Maternal and Child Health in fiscal year 2015.

CONCLUSION

For nearly a century, Helen Keller International has saved the sight and lives of millions. Today, we are as determined as ever to accomplish even more on behalf of children and adults in developing countries.

Helen Keller may have said it the best, "Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it." Thank you for your consideration.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS**

Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Request

Via Electronic Mail

Name of Submitting Institution/Entity

Humane Society International (HSI)
Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)
Defenders of Wildlife

Project Statement of Purpose:

We request that \$30 million be appropriated to support environmental trade capacity building and environmental cooperation activities related to implementation of the environment chapters of the United States – Peru Trade Promotion Agreement (PTPA), the United States - Central America - Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR), the United States – Panama Free Trade Agreement and the United States – Colombia Free Trade Agreement. These funds are made available through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. Department of State.

Background

Implementation of environment chapters of U.S. free trade agreements (FTAs) involves cooperation among USAID, U.S. Department of State, and the U.S. Trade Representative's office. Other agencies may also be involved depending on the agreement (e.g., Fish and Wildlife Service). The programs involved in implementation of the environment chapters of these agreements are designed by the U.S. and the trading partner/s involved. The countries prepare a work plan for environmental trade capacity building and environmental cooperation that becomes the guide for on-the-ground work. Programs are typically implemented by a hybrid of government personnel, and the public and private sector. These programs are critical to the success of our free trade agreements and require specific funding allocation. Funding for these programs is not an earmark request. Work done on these programs will be competitively bid out.

Agency, Program, Amount of Money Involved:

Total Project Cost: \$30 million. This would include \$10 million for environmental trade capacity

FY 2015 Appropriations Request

building under the PTPA, \$10 million for environmental trade capacity building under CAFTA-DR and \$10 million to be split between Panama and Colombia for environmental activities related to implementation of the environment chapters of these agreements.

A review of the Presidential Budget for FY 14 (see pg. 928 of the Budget for Fiscal Year 2015) reveals the following relevant text:

(h) TRADE CAPACITY.—Funds appropriated by this Act under the headings “Development Assistance” and “Economic Support Fund” should be made available for labor and environmental capacity building activities relating to free trade agreements with countries of Central America, Colombia, Peru, and the Dominican Republic.(emphasis added)

This language is in stark contrast to prior funding allocations for important free trade agreements because 1) the section does not indicate a specific dollar amount allocated for trade capacity building; and 2) the section indicates that funds “should” be allocated, as opposed to “shall” be allocated, thereby creating the possibility that no funding at all will go toward environmental trade capacity building.

The chart below summarizes how funding has been appropriated toward trade capacity building from FY 2008 to FY 2014. A more detailed version of this chart, citing to language of each appropriations bill, is not included due to space restrictions but can be made available upon request. In past years, between \$16 and \$36 million has been allocated specifically toward trade capacity building. In FY 2014 no specific sum was allocated and it is now at the discretion of the agencies involved. Trade capacity building is a critical part of the implementation of the U.S. FTAs, as will be further explained below, and funding for its execution should be concrete and compulsory.

	PTPA	CAFTA-DR	TOTAL
FY 2008*	\$6 million (labor and environment)	\$10 million (labor and environment)	\$16 million
FY 2009*	\$10 million (environment)	\$20 million (labor and environment)	\$30 million
FY 2010*	\$16 million (labor and environment, with \$13 million for environment specifically)	\$20 million (trade capacity building generally, including labor and environment)	\$36 million
FY 2011	N/A (no relevant language)		N/A
FY 2012	\$20 million for PTPA and CAFTA (labor and environment)		\$20 million
FY 2013	N/A (no relevant language)		N/A
FY 2014	No \$ amount indicated and texts includes “shall” and not “should”		Ambiguous

*Information in Bill as well as accompanying explanatory statement.

We are submitting this request with the hope that Congress will again include a specific binding provision in the FY 2015 Appropriations Bill dedicating funding for environmental trade capacity building under the above-mentioned FTAs.

Project Summary:

FY 2015 Appropriations Request

The PTPA, CAFTA-DR, Panama FTA and Colombia FTA contain provisions requiring parties to effectively enforce their environmental laws and committing parties to environmental cooperation activities that include wildlife protection, deforestation, and other pressing environmental concerns. Environmental trade capacity building funding is critical to carrying out these obligations, particularly since many U.S. trading partners are not at the same level of economic development as the U.S. and need assistance reaching the level of environmental protection specified in the agreement and called for by the U.S.

In a July 2009 report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO Report 09-439), which reviewed labor and environment progress/obstacles under U.S. FTAs with Chile, Singapore, Morocco and Jordan, reliable funding for environmental issues was cited as a key component to making progress in implementing the environmental obligations in these FTAs. The relevance of this conclusion extends to other FTAs as well, such as the PTPA, CAFTA-DR, and the FTAs with Panama and Colombia. Beginning in 2005 for CAFTA-DR, and 2008 for the PTPA, Congress has set aside dedicated funding for environmental trade capacity building.

This funding has resulted in significant environmental benefits, such as strengthening enforcement of environmental laws, protecting and conserving biodiversity, and promoting conservation through sustainable tourism. Under CAFTA-DR, for example, there are a number of successful wildlife protection and enforcement programs that have had measurable benefits for the environment, local communities, and biodiversity. See, e.g., http://www.caftadr-environment.org/top_menu/activities/activity_theme_b.html. Under the PTPA, many programs are underway focused on implementation of the environment chapter and Forest Annex, with special focus on increasing law enforcement of environmental laws and providing training to Peruvian government personnel on endangered species.

Environmental trade capacity building funding is critical to addressing broad issues, such as:

- (1) effective enforcement of environmental laws, including those focused on implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs);
- (2) institutional changes and reforms, such as reforms of national environmental laws and/or changes to Ministries (e.g., in Peru, a Ministry of Environment was established following entry into force of the PTPA); and
- (3) goals of increasing public participation, such as through the establishment of independent secretariats that receive citizen complaints about environmental enforcement issues, or creation of national advisory committees that assist the government with trade and environment policy.

Our organizations are not only concerned with broader objectives as outlined above, but also with more specific issues dealing with wildlife protection and deforestation/destruction of natural habitats. This includes programs that focus on successful implementation of national laws implementing the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) (applicable to forestry and wildlife), training for government officials on how to identify and properly confiscate illegally traded wildlife, wildlife rescue and rehabilitation, and promotion of ecotourism as an economic alternative to poaching and illegal wildlife trade.

FY 2015 Appropriations Request

Explicitly designating funding in FY 2015 to implement environmental obligations under U.S. FTAs is necessary to support new and ongoing multi-stakeholder programs. Since the PTPA, CAFTA-DR, and Panama and Colombia FTAs are the most recently negotiated, and have the most comprehensive environmental obligations, we believe emphasis should be placed on these agreements.

Budget Breakdown (\$30 million total):

- **PTPA - \$10 million:** \$2 million for wildlife in particular, \$8 million for all other.
 - Wildlife programs (see below *)
 - Strengthening the capacity to develop, implement and enforce environmental and forest sector laws and regulations, putting special emphasis on national and regional forest authorities.
 - Support for implementation of the Forestry and Wildlife law and regulations, and any future reforms of such law and regulations.
 - Training Peruvian government officials and NGOs at the national, local and regional levels on effective implementation of environmental laws, including those implementing MEAs like CITES that are listed in the environment chapter.
 - Implementation of the Forest Annex, including ensuring chain of custody requirements are met.
 - Establishment and support for an independent secretariat, pursuant to the obligations of the agreement, to consider citizen submissions regarding effective enforcement of environmental laws (support includes salary, personnel, overhead, and a publicly available website).
 - Building capacity to promote transparency and public participation in forest sector governance (e.g., including civil society in discussions/consultations about legal reforms of the forestry sector).
 - Support for the Environmental Affairs Council and Environmental Cooperation Agreement.
- **CAFTA-DR - \$10 million:** \$2 million for wildlife in particular, \$8 million for all other.
 - Wildlife programs (see below *)
 - Continued support for strengthening effective enforcement and implementation of environmental laws, including those implementing MEAs such as CITES, at the national, regional and local levels.
 - Continued support for wildlife rescue centers to handle the numerous animals (including support for infrastructure) confiscated from the illegal wildlife trade, in order to ensure the best possible rehabilitation and release. (see also below *)
 - Continued support for the Independent Secretariat, pursuant to the obligations of the agreement, who considers citizen submissions regarding effective enforcement of environmental laws (support includes salary, personnel, overhead, and a publicly available website).
 - Continued support for the Environmental Affairs Council and Environmental Cooperation Agreement.
- **Panama and Colombia FTAs - \$10 million:** \$2 million for wildlife in particular, \$8 million for all other.

FY 2015 Appropriations Request

- Wildlife programs (see below *)
- Support for implementation of environmental commitments under the FTAs.
- Support for effective enforcement and implementation of environmental laws, including those implementing MEAs such as CITES, at the national, regional and local levels.

As indicated, our organizations believe that of the total amount for environmental trade capacity building under the above-mentioned four FTAs, not less than \$2 million should be set aside for wildlife programs in particular, including:

- Wildlife protection and enforcement (includes training, public outreach, establishment and maintenance of wildlife rescue centers, and ecotourism programs that provide an alternative income source to poaching - all of which will also help countries meet their obligations under the trade agreements to effectively enforce their national environmental laws, including those implementing CITES).
- Funding for wildlife rescue centers. Strong wildlife laws and enforcement efforts will be undermined if there are insufficient or ill-equipped facilities to handle confiscated animals.

Language in the FY 2014 Bill:

(h) TRADE CAPACITY.—Funds appropriated by this Act under the headings “Development Assistance” and “Economic Support Fund” should be made available for labor and environmental capacity building activities relating to free trade agreements with countries of Central America, Colombia, Peru, and the Dominican Republic. (emphasis added)

Proposed Language for FY 2015:

(h) TRADE CAPACITY.—Of the funds appropriated by this Act under the headings “Development Assistance” and “Economic Support Fund”, not less than \$30,000,000 shall be made available for environmental trade capacity building activities related to implementation of the environment chapter of free trade agreements with the countries of Central America and the Dominica Republic (\$10,000,000), Colombia (\$5,000,000), Panama (\$5,000,000), and Peru (\$10,000,000).

Of these funds, \$2,000,000 under CAFTA-DR, \$2,000,000 under the United States-Peru TPA and \$2,000,000 combined under the United States-Panama FTA and United States-Colombia FTA shall be used for wildlife protection and conservation programs, including support to wildlife rescue centers. The Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the United States Department of State shall work together to determine priority funding needs.

*Note: The proposed language for FY 2015 does not include a request for funding for labor initiatives as this is outside the scope of our organization’s work, although we recognize that labor and environment funding are typically addressed together. Our hope is that any funding for labor will be provided in addition to the funding requested above.

Testimony submitted by Robert N. Kaplan, President and CEO of the Inter-American Foundation
 To the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs
 April 4, 2014

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the Inter-American Foundation (IAF), to submit testimony to Chairwoman Granger and Members of the Subcommittee and to thank you for your consistent, bipartisan support of the IAF. This testimony is based upon the IAF's official Congressional Budget Justification submitted to the Subcommittee on March 19, 2014.

The IAF is an independent U.S. foreign-assistance agency that promotes and invests in citizen-led grassroots development in Latin America and the Caribbean to help communities thrive. Over 250 active projects in 20 countries are currently helping hundreds of thousands of marginalized people -- including women, at-risk youth, African descendants and indigenous peoples -- start small businesses, create jobs, build skills, access markets, improve nutrition, learn practices for an inclusive democracy and hold governments accountable to the law.

In FY 2015, the President is requesting an appropriation of \$18.1 million for the IAF, which equals the President's FY 2014 request and represents a reduction of 19.6 percent from the level enacted in FY 2014. A strong appropriation in FY 2015 will enable the IAF to promote economic opportunity, strengthen the practice of democracy, foster social inclusion and strengthen resilience to crime and violence, in line with U.S. foreign policy and national security priorities in Latin America and the Caribbean. The IAF multiplies the U.S. Government's investment; for every \$1 invested in IAF projects, the IAF leverages \$1.30 from its grantees and other partners. A strong appropriation will allow the IAF to maintain a U.S. presence where diplomatic relations are strained or in countries where other assistance programs have closed, while doing so at a fraction of the cost of other options.

The IAF Serves U.S. Interests

Public support for democracy is high in Latin America, yet a majority of citizens in the region are not satisfied with how democracy works in practice in their country. In public opinion polls throughout the region, citizens cite insecurity and economic problems, including unemployment, as the most pressing problems in their lives. These are challenges of governance that must be addressed at all levels of the civic space.

Citizen-led development that helps build more democratic, secure and resilient communities in our Hemisphere is fundamentally in the interest of the United States. These communities provide the foundation for stronger U.S. allies. The agency's judicious investments provide the U.S. government with a direct link to civil society and lessons about effective development practices.

In 2012, IAF participated in the Center for Effective Philanthropy's (CEP) grantee perception survey. The results of the survey demonstrated that the IAF ranked highest against all other participating organizations with regard to its impact in strengthening grantee partners'.

capabilities. In addition, **72 percent of respondents stated that working with the IAF had positively affected their opinion of the United States.**

Creating economic opportunity. IAF investments catalyze economic activity and create jobs that help improve lives and allow communities to retain their workers and leaders. These investments establish economic anchors that are locally developed and more sustainable and effective as a result.

Fostering secure communities. IAF funding complements the work of other U.S. agencies to improve security and rule of law by enabling members of at-risk communities to access income-generating alternatives to crime and create a safe environment that is intolerant of criminal activity.

Strengthening democratic practices. IAF grantee partners are building a more democratic citizenry and a more inclusive civil society by training and encouraging marginalized communities to exercise their civic responsibilities, respect rights and hold officials accountable.

Providing a direct link to civil society. Having worked with more than 5,000 grantee partners, the IAF's credibility and contacts among civil society groups across the region are a valuable resource for the U.S. government and other development organizations. Other U.S. government agencies and development organizations engage IAF networks and relationships in order to stimulate broader participation in forums on important development issues. Recent IAF collaborations with the U.S. State Department include participating in the Partnership for Growth (PfG) in El Salvador, the Inter-American Social Protection Network (IASPN), the Americas Partnership on Social Inclusion and Equality (APSIE) and the U.S.-Brazil Joint Action Plan to Promote Racial and Ethnic Equality (JAPER).

Informing investments in development. By evaluating each investment and providing opportunities for learning and exchange across the grantee partner network, the IAF applies, shares and multiplies its lessons learned.

The IAF Provides a Cost-Effective Approach

The IAF delivers development assistance that is smart and highly cost-effective.

Value. The IAF selectively funds 10-15 percent of the proposals it receives and 100 percent of its grant budget goes directly to the intended recipients. The IAF constantly works to keep overhead low, including by outsourcing many administrative and technical functions.

Leverage. The IAF multiplies grant funding and maximizes returns by requiring all of its grantee partners to invest their own resources and mobilize contributions from others. Giving grantees a stake in the outcome of their projects makes them more likely to succeed. Over the last five years, each dollar invested by the IAF leveraged \$1.30 from grantees or others.

Local Community Ownership. The IAF invests directly in initiatives that are designed and implemented by the poor themselves, enabling each community to take ownership and ensuring local commitment to the project's success as well as sustainability over the long term.

Private-sector partnerships. The IAF actively collaborates with the private sector in joint funding initiatives, including with members of the IAF-initiated Latin American business-sector alliance, RedEAmérica. This network channels resources to strengthen communities and helps parent corporations move beyond philanthropic giving toward a more commercially integrated and sustainable development approach.

Accountability and results. The IAF holds all grantee partners accountable for the responsible use of U.S. public funds and successful implementation of their projects through annual financial audits and required reporting at six-month intervals on their progress in achieving targeted results. The IAF's rigorous evaluation methodology includes independently verifying the data reported.

Transparency. The IAF openly shares the allocation of its resources and the results that its investments achieve. Its data, including funding and transaction-level expenditures, is available on the U.S. Foreign Assistance Dashboard. The IAF's website describes the rationale for each new grant funding action, features a regional map of active projects, explains IAF's methodology for measuring results, and shares the agency's annual report on grant results and ex-post evaluations. In FY 2013, the IAF became the first U.S. government agency to receive the Foundation Center's "glasspockets" designation for transparency, accountability and accessibility of information.

Networks. The IAF has worked with more than 5,000 grantee partners and has an extensive network for learning and exchange. New and existing grantee partners collaborate and share best practices across cultures and borders. This dramatically amplifies the effect of the IAF's investment across the region.

The IAF Complements Broader U.S. Government Development Efforts

The needs of vulnerable people are shifting and multiplying in today's global economy. The IAF's direct connection to civil society, broad networks, nuanced knowledge of local contexts and specialized expertise directly complement other U.S. development efforts.

Expertise in citizen-led development. The IAF is expert in identifying and supporting promising ideas introduced by grassroots groups working to help their communities thrive. Investing in their knowledge, skills, ingenuity and organizational strength improves their ability to sustain their own efforts beyond IAF support.

Direct access to civil society. The IAF's relationship with partner organizations is direct, fluid and dynamic throughout the period of the grant. This approach has earned the IAF legitimacy and trust from civil society groups and increased the chances of a grant-recipient's success.

Flexibility. The IAF can quickly amend its funding to address changing conditions on the ground or expand the reach of successful initiatives. The implication is improved operational efficiency.

U.S. presence. The IAF does not operate through foreign governments. Due to its direct funding to communities, it is often able to continue working in countries where diplomatic relations with the United States are strained.

Preparation of communities to realize economic opportunities. The IAF's investments help disadvantaged groups take part in economic opportunities created by larger development investments in infrastructure or other programs.

Strengthening of local capacity to sustain development efforts. Community-based groups and enterprises that improve their organization, management and operations with the IAF's help are often better prepared to become new partners in other U.S. government and business initiatives or to become self-sustaining.

Focus on marginalized groups. The IAF puts a priority on the economic, social and civic inclusion of the region's most vulnerable or disadvantaged citizens, including women, children and young people, African descendants, indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities. IAF grants active in fiscal 2013 have benefitted more than 357,000 people in poor and marginalized communities in 20 countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

In closing, judicious investment in grassroots organizations advances U.S. foreign policy in Latin America and the Caribbean by creating economic opportunities, fostering more secure communities and strengthening democratic practices. Communities that are economically vibrant, secure and engaged in civic life provide the foundation for stronger allies.



**TESTIMONY ON FY 2015 STATE DEPARTMENT FOREIGN OPERATIONS
APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE HOUSE STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS AND
RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE**

April 4, 2014

Michael Klosson, Vice President, Policy and Humanitarian Response
Save the Children

On behalf of Save the Children, I thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony focused on the needs of vulnerable children and families around the world to be addressed in the FY 2015 State-Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. Save the Children is a nonprofit, child-focused organization working in 19 states across the nation (and the District of Columbia) as well as in more than 120 countries. We build capacity for countries to deliver and provide direct support for health, education, protection, and disaster relief services for more than 125 million children. For FY 2015 State, Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, Save the Children supports:

- \$800 million to fund core programs within the Maternal and Child Health Account
- \$200 million for the nutrition-specific USAID account within Global Health Programs
- \$1.2 billion for Feed the Future
- \$800 million (bilateral) and an additional \$125 million for Global Partnership on Education (GPE) for basic education programs for children overseas
- \$5.2 billion for humanitarian accounts, including \$2.1 billion for International Disaster Assistance (IDA) and \$3.1 billion for Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA)
- \$1.5 billion for USAID Operating Expenses

Save the Children supports robust funding for the 150 account, and opposes deep and disproportionate cuts to an account which represents only about 1% of the budget – a sliver of overall discretionary spending. In these times of tight budget constraints, it is more important than ever to remember that the well-being of our nation is inextricably linked to creating a more

stable and prosperous world. We are dedicated to working with Congress to support and maintain investments in international development.

We welcome Congress' decision to provide robust funding in our priority areas in recently enacted Fiscal Year 2014 Consolidated Omnibus Appropriations Act. This continued U.S. commitment has contributed to: the reduction of child deaths by nearly half since 1990; a decline of new HIV infections among children under 15 years old by 35% globally between 2009 and 2012; and a decrease in global hunger by more than 34 percent since 1990. In addition, U.S. support has helped develop resilience in communities and helped millions of people rebuild their lives after natural disasters and other crises, such as the recent typhoon that hit the Philippines.

As you know, these programs not only have tremendous impact on improving our world, but they also advance U.S. economic and security interests. Nearly half of all U.S. exports now go to the developing world--representing 95% of the world's consumers and supporting over 10 million American jobs. Ten of America's top 15 trading partners were once recipients of foreign aid. When countries we assist grow and prosper, America has the opportunity to grow and prosper.

We therefore urge the Committee do its best to protect funding at robust levels for these critical programs, including the Action Plan for Children in Adversity (APCA), that impacts children and demonstrate strong U.S. international leadership. This is not only the right thing to do, but investing in children now is critical to securing our future health, prosperity, and security.

Maternal and Child Health, and Nutrition: At a Washington conference in 2012, the Governments of the United States, India and Ethiopia issued a Call to Action to end preventable child deaths. As a result, 172 nations – including our own –signed a pledge to step up their efforts and invest their own resources to achieve this bold vision within a generation. In 2010,

the U.S. and Ireland launched the 1000 Days Partnership to bring attention, investment and political will to fighting malnutrition in the 1000 days from pregnancy to age 2; Nobel Prize winning economists have called this the most effective development intervention in recent times.

The U.S. commitment to end preventable child deaths requires continued robust funding of the maternal and child health account. The programs under this account have delivered unprecedented success worldwide to improve the survival and health of mothers and children. Over the past two decades, child mortality has dropped by almost half and maternal mortality has dropped by one-third globally. With U.S. assistance, almost a billion cases of child diarrhea are treated each year; more than 100 million children received basic immunizations and 75 million infants and children with pneumonia received treatment annually. It is vital to support this account as such resources are still needed to tackle stubborn challenges such as newborn deaths: A million children die on the day they are born; newborn deaths account for 44% of all child deaths under the age of five worldwide. U.S. leadership has also led to increased country ownership of maternal and child health, so many countries have developed their own multi-year national child health and nutrition plans.

Hunger and Food Security: *Feed the Future* (FtF) is a whole-of-government strategy focused on tackling global hunger and malnutrition. It is aimed at improving agricultural productivity, expanding markets and trade, strengthening the resilience of vulnerable rural communities, and preventing child malnutrition in at least 19 priority countries. Development assistance programs like the FtF initiative reach some of the most vulnerable families as well as those with potential to be small or medium-sized entrepreneurs – who, with the added support, can lift their families and communities out of poverty. In 2013, a GAO report (GAO-13-809) confirmed that FtF is effectively coordinating and integrating partner agencies' knowledge and expertise. In 2012,

FtF achieved or surpassed most goals, including working with over 7.4 million farmers who adopted improved agricultural technologies or practices, and getting critical micronutrients and other nutrition programs to over 12 million children. The success of these and other FtF outcomes depends upon the continued commitment of Congress to provide full funding.

Basic Education (bilateral) and Global Partnership on Education (GPE): Around the world, 57 million primary school aged children are still not in school. And many more children who are in school fail to acquire even basic reading, writing and numeracy skills. Support for basic education funding is imperative to help the U.S. reach its strategic goals, including to improve reading skills for 100 million children in primary grades by 2015, and to increase equitable access to education in crisis and conflict environments for 15 million learners by 2015. In at least six countries, USAID is funding education activities based on a Save the Children Literacy Boost program, which studies show leads to significantly higher school retention rates and up to 4.5 times greater gains on key reading skills. In addition to the \$800 million for bilateral funding, we ask the Subcommittee to increase support for the Global Partnership for Education, the only multilateral exclusively focused on giving all children around the world the opportunity to learn. If all students in low-income countries completed school with basic reading skills, 171 million people could be lifted out of poverty.

Children in Emergency and Conflict Situations: Children are always the most vulnerable in any conflict or emergency. Robust investment in the Migration and Refugee Assistance, and International Disaster Assistance accounts will enable the U.S. to continue addressing the increased needs posed by humanitarian crises. When disasters strike, these funds ensure that vulnerable populations around the globe have access to food, clean water, safe shelter and other lifesaving assistance. Children are particularly affected by emergencies, as demonstrated by the

food crisis in the Horn of Africa in 2011 and the Sahel in 2012. Cuts to humanitarian budgets, as proposed in the President's FY15 budget request, could have drastic consequences, hobbling the ability of the U.S. to respond fully to emerging crises in areas of strategic interest such as Syria without cutting life-saving assistance in other places of acute need such as South Sudan or the Central African Republic. The reduced ability of the US to provide support for people displaced by conflict or natural disaster, or to conduct programs aimed at supporting vulnerable women and children in conflict, would also undermine U.S. foreign policy goals to build stability in critical places. Continued U.S. commitment to adequate levels of humanitarian funding is important both for the well-being of those we help and our national interests. With ongoing crises in Syria, the Central African Republic, and South Sudan, it is critical that the U.S continue to make the necessary investments into vital programs.

USAID Operating Expenses: Robust funding for the USAID Operating Expenses will allow key foreign assistance reforms to advance and strengthen U.S. humanitarian and development programs. Proper funding will improve efficiency and ensure effective use of taxpayer dollars by modernizing implementation and procurement systems. By increasing USAID's capacity for evaluation, we can ensure U.S. foreign assistance programs are based on strong evidence and have maximum impact for children and their families in the developing world.

Conclusion: We thank the Subcommittee for its continued leadership on U.S. humanitarian and development programs and its demonstrated strong support for these priority programs in the FY14 appropriations process. Save the Children is deeply appreciative of your efforts that are essential for fighting poverty and giving children at home and around the world a fair chance in life. We ask for your continued partnership with us to invest in children so they have what every child deserves – the right to survive and thrive.

**Written Testimony to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign
Operations and Related Programs on the FY 2015 President's Budget Request
Submitted by Margaret G. McGlynn,
President and CEO of the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI)**

Chairwoman Granger, Ranking Member Lowey and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the President's Budget request for Fiscal Year 2015. My name is Margaret McGlynn and I am President and CEO of the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), based in New York. IAVI is a not-for-profit, public-private product development partnership whose mission is to ensure the development of safe, effective, accessible, preventive HIV vaccines for use throughout the world. The President's Fiscal Year 2015 Budget request includes \$28.7 million to maintain support for IAVI's ongoing partnership with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

IAVI's vision is a world without AIDS. We work with many partners to fulfill our deep commitment to advancing the science of AIDS prevention and bringing a vaccine closer to those who need it most. We are proud to partner with USAID in this endeavor, continuing the agency's long tradition of fostering advances in science and technology to benefit the world's neediest populations. Indeed, the new USAID mission statement is emblematic of this commitment. It is gratifying to see the agency's emphasis on applying science and technology in the quest to end extreme poverty and build resilient, democratic societies. IAVI is privileged to serve as a partner in this work.

I would like to address three points in this statement: the urgent need for an AIDS vaccine, recent scientific progress in the field, and the value of the research capacity being strengthened in Africa as we advance toward an AIDS vaccine. First, please let me express, on behalf of IAVI and our many partners, my deep gratitude for the ongoing support of Congress in this endeavor.

The urgent need for an AIDS vaccine

More than 30 years after the virus was first identified, HIV/AIDS continues to devastate. More than 35 million people live with HIV worldwide. Last year 2.3 million people were newly infected with HIV and 1.6 million people died from AIDS-related causes, nearly two-thirds of them in sub-Saharan Africa. This scourge is not limited to the developing world: more than one million people in the United States are living with HIV, with the South bearing a disproportionate share (nearly half) of this disease burden. Fortunately, glimmers of hope emerge from among these grim statistics, thanks in large part to U.S. Government support through the PEPFAR program. Recent years have seen vast improvements in AIDS treatment and prevention, including wider access to antiretroviral therapy. New UNAIDS figures show that in just three years (2009-2012), the number of people accessing HIV treatment increased by 70 percent. The number of AIDS-related deaths fell by more than half a million between 2005 and 2012.

Yet the pandemic continues to outpace our ability to treat and prevent new infections. There are still 6,300 new infections every day; for every three people accessing treatment, four more become infected. And the most vulnerable continue to pay the highest price: 260,000 children in the developing world contracted HIV last year, and the prevalence among young women in Sub-Saharan Africa is more than double that among men. AIDS is the number-one killer of women of reproductive age in the world. The financial costs are significant, as well:

nearly \$19 billion was spent to fight HIV/AIDS in low- and middle-income countries in 2012, still at least \$4 billion short of what is needed, based on UNAIDS projections.

Ending the HIV/AIDS pandemic demands a response that marries expansion of existing treatment and prevention programs with the development and swift rollout of new prevention technologies. Modeling data suggest that even if we achieve ambitious UNAIDS goals for scaling up currently available HIV/AIDS interventions in low- and middle-income countries, the end of AIDS cannot be achieved without a vaccine and other new prevention technologies. The PEPFAR Blueprint for an AIDS-free Generation specifically calls for continued development of microbicides and vaccines. A well implemented vaccination program with a vaccine that is 60% effective could reduce the number of new infections in developing countries by a quarter in the first decade after introduction, and almost half over the first 25 years. That's up to 22 million potential infections averted.

The sooner we develop an effective AIDS vaccine, the sooner we can begin to avert the human and financial costs of future infections. Great progress has been made in the fight against AIDS, but it is clear that current tools are not enough to get us to the finish line.

Recent progress in the AIDS vaccine field

Several recent scientific breakthroughs have brought an effective vaccine within our reach. Results of a 2009 clinical trial in Thailand showed, for the first time, that a vaccine can help prevent HIV infection. Efforts are underway to better understand the factors that contributed to that protection. Moreover, over the last few years, IAVI and collaborators have made the breakthrough discovery of a series of naturally occurring broadly neutralizing antibodies that show us a pathway to developing a broadly effective AIDS vaccine. These discoveries were made possible through a collaboration between IAVI and U.S.-based biotech partners, illustrating the power of our partnerships with industry, academia, and scientific research organizations in the United States and around the world. IAVI is accelerating its broadly neutralizing antibody program on an aggressive timeline to translate the best ideas into clinical candidates, with the first vaccine candidates designed to elicit broadly neutralizing antibodies to HIV entering early product development and screening in humans, representing a significant milestone for the field.

The clinical pipeline also continues to progress. IAVI and our partners have translated groundbreaking technologies into 26 vaccine candidates, of which 15 have been tested in 27 early-stage human trials in 11 countries. This substantial scientific progress would not have been possible without the strong partnership of USAID and the steadfast support of Congress.

There have been challenges as well, including the early termination in 2013 of a large clinical trial, conducted by the NIH, evaluating whether a candidate vaccine regimen could prevent HIV infection or slow its progression to AIDS, after it became clear the regimen would fall short on both goals. This kind of setback, while disappointing, is to be expected in vaccine development. Vaccine researchers learn through informed trial and error what works, and what does not, and use that knowledge to hone their strategies and press ahead.

Strengthening clinical research capacity in Africa

While the path to an AIDS vaccine is long and complex, we are heartened by important progress along the way. Like our USAID partners, IAVI has a strong focus on sustainable research capacity in the developing world. Strengthening this capacity is central to IAVI's mission, as it directly contributes to the science that will develop a vaccine, helps ensure that the

vaccine ultimately matches the epidemic, and contributes to the infrastructure that will facilitate wide access to that vaccine once it is developed. We work with a network of clinical research centers in five of the most affected African countries, strengthening local scientific expertise and testing vaccine candidates in the places where they are needed most. IAVI sponsored the first HIV vaccine trials in Kenya, Zambia, Rwanda, and India, for example. Beyond equipping clinics and laboratories, IAVI also has overseen the training of more than 1,600 clinicians, nurses and counselors to ensure that they conduct their work in accordance with the highest scientific and ethical standards. I am proud to report that IAVI-supported clinical research centers have conducted 16 HIV vaccine and non-vaccine clinical trials in Africa to date.

Through our research efforts, we are also amplifying the efforts of PEPFAR and other implementers to provide HIV voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) in Africa. IAVI's clinical partners on the continent provided free VCT to more than 47,000 individuals in 2012 alone; more than 300,000 individuals have gained access to VCT through IAVI-supported research since 2004. These are important markers of progress in support of the USAID development mission – strengthening health systems and sustainable research capacity, with a focus on building African leadership and ownership of HIV vaccine design and development, along the way to discovery of a vaccine.

Sustaining the commitment

There is great optimism in the AIDS vaccine field today. But this is tempered by the reality that vaccine development is hard – and HIV is a uniquely challenging target. I am grateful for the enormous support this Subcommittee has shown for IAVI's partnership with USAID, whose commitment has also been essential to the quest for a vaccine. We are poised to capitalize on the promising discoveries of the past several years and advance candidates into clinical testing with the promise of ending this devastating epidemic. The investment we are making now will dramatically accelerate delivery of a vaccine to those who need it most, but the continued backing of Congress will be vital to ensure steady forward progress in the field. I urge you to support the President's FY 2015 Budget request of \$28.7 million for the IAVI-USAID partnership to ensure development of an AIDS vaccine. Your continued support will put us all an important step closer to a world without AIDS.



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**STATEMENT BY JEANNE BOURGAULT
 PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
 INTERNEWS**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS,
 AND RELATED PROGRAMS
 COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
 U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

APRIL 4, 2014

Madam Chairwoman, on behalf of Internews, I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony for the record to the Subcommittee on the importance of access to reliable, quality, local news and information. We are very grateful for the Subcommittee's leadership and support for programs that strengthen global civil society and improve access to information. We urge the Committee to continue funding such media and civil society development programs through the Department of State and the U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in fiscal year 2015. We request that the Subcommittee:

- Continue to support local media development in Afghanistan and Pakistan as they go through critical social and political transitions.
- Increase investment in independent media as a tool for addressing global health issues.
- Continue to support and expand on the Internet freedom agenda, ensuring that all citizens of the world enjoy access and use of an affordable, safe and uncensored Internet.
- Continue to support independent media and journalists in Egypt, critical to the building of a stable democratic society.
- Continue to support independent media and journalists in Myanmar, and an emergent generation of media entrepreneurs and advocates, critical to the building of a stable democratic society.

Internews, an international non-profit organization headquartered in California, has been working to improve the flow of civic minded, locally-produced news and information for 30 years. We have worked in over 90 countries and trained more than 90,000 people in journalism and media skills. Today we are active from Central African Republic to Ukraine to Burma working with local partners in pursuit of a better world.

QUALITY NEWS AND INFORMATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN

Critical to a successful transition in Afghanistan beyond this year's elections and drawdown of NATO forces is an independent and self-sustaining pluralistic media sector that plays a crucial watchdog role in support of government accountability. With USAID supported programming, Internews has been providing essential support to the media sector since 2002.

Launched by Internews in 2003, Salam Watandar is an independent national radio service providing news and entertainment to a network of 59 Afghan-owned local radio stations in all 34 provinces. The broadcast of these local voices has opened up a critical platform for public dialogue that bridges the gap between Kabul and the provinces.

In 2012, the Internews-founded Nai Supporting Open Media in Afghanistan launched the accredited Nai Media Institute (NMI), offering the first two year vocational Diploma in Media course in Afghanistan.

Internews has also worked with local partners to establish a network of four Anaar Multimedia Centers in Afghanistan's main provincial cities that aim to build civil society networks through an increase in access to information. Internews is investing in the business development of all our local partners to guide them on the path to sustainability.

In Pakistan, Internews has been operating continuously since 2003. Programs focus on underserved populations in some of the most challenging areas of the country and include training journalists, supporting a network of press clubs, curriculum reform and providing humanitarian information services in flood affected areas. The overall strategy is to increase the reach, quality, and quantity of news and information.

We ask that the Committee continue US government support, through funds provided for the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of State, for local, independent media in Afghanistan and Pakistan for fiscal year 2015.

HARNESSING MEDIA TO RESPOND TO IMPROVE GLOBAL HEALTH

In nearly a decade of work in Sub-Saharan Africa, Internews has seen the critical impact that accurate information has on public health. Supported by USAID, our projects have stimulated accurate, responsible, and effective local media coverage on HIV/AIDS, malaria and pandemic health issues.

In Kenya, a PEPFAR grant was used to train and mentor journalists to educate the public on effective HIV prevention and treatment methods. Over time, these journalists matured into some of the best on the continent; some went on to cover Kenya's disputed presidential election and subsequent political crisis, using the skills they learned to draw the world's attention. Three of them were nominated for CNN's Journalist of the Year award.

EXPANDING THE INTERNET FREEDOM AGENDA

The Internet brings unprecedented opportunities for freedom of expression and access to information. It is driving down geographic, economic and cultural barriers and is supporting political and economic development worldwide. The Internet's promise, however, remains unfulfilled and under threat due to persistent gaps in governance, access, affordability and safety. This is a critical moment for the development of one the world's richest resources.

Internews, in partnership with the U.S. State Department, is helping give people the ability to freely and safely access information and make their voices heard around the world, including in some of the most digitally dangerous places in the world. Leveraging venture capital-style investment in cutting-edge technologies, Internews helps to grow internet access in safe and secure ways for millions of Internet and mobile-phone users. A new wave of cyber threats, too, bring unprecedented challenges for journalists and civic leaders, requiring new tactics and strategies that must be continuously developed and deployed to ensure online safety.

No efforts to build and support reliable and safe media and communications are worthwhile however, without the internet and telecommunication backbones that make it all possible. A multipronged effort to empower civil society and business sectors in 20 + countries is expanding their ability to engage in public policy dialogues and advocacy on issues of essential relevance to Internet freedom. They are also bringing previously unknown voices to international for dealing with Internet governance and infrastructure development.

We ask that the Committee continue US government support, through funds provided for the Department of State, for Internet freedom programs for fiscal year 2015.

SUPPORTING INDEPENDENT MEDIA AND JOURNALISTS IN EGYPT

Internews has been working in Egypt since 2006 and consistently supports media development through journalism trainings, skills-building and access to information. Internews has built lasting partnerships Independent and diverse Egyptian media outlets and trained more than 150 media representatives on digital journalism.

Since the revolution in 2011, Internews has increased its activities in support of a free and independent media by working with human rights and media freedom organizations, independent media houses and Egyptian academia.

Internews focuses on enhancing dialogue and partnerships between key media stakeholders to further media reform and to improve standards of journalism and the media's ability to serve as a platform for transparency, accountability and a diversity of views and opinions during the period of transition to democracy in Egypt.

We ask that the Committee continue US government support, through funds provided for the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of State, for local, independent media in Egypt for fiscal year 2015.

SUPPORTING INDEPENDENT MEDIA AND JOURNALISTS IN BURMA

Internews has been working on independent media issues related to Burma since 2001. Internews continues to support media development through journalism trainings, skills-building and access to information. As Burma's media enters a new era of challenge and responsibility, even in the current climate of reform, their work will not be easy and the fledging internal media must continue to be supported. Internews is deeply invested in Burma's continued progress and brings unrivaled experience to the pursuit of developing a well-informed, increasingly democratic and a more just country.

We ask that the Committee continue US government support, through funds provided for the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of State, for local, independent media in Myanmar for fiscal year 2015.

CONCLUSION

We believe that a major goal of US foreign policy should be universal access to quality, local and accurate information. Local media, citizen media, and civil society institutions armed with communications technologies can empower communities and amplify American approaches to development, diplomacy and national security.

Outside Witness Testimony for FY2015

Written Statement for the Record

by Diana Cohen Altman

Executive Director, Karabakh Foundation

Washington, D.C.

The United States House of Representatives

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Submitted to SFApprop.Detailee@mail.house.gov

April 4, 2014

Madam Chairwoman, honorable Ranking Member, honorable members of the Subcommittee:

The Karabakh Foundation is a U.S. 501 (c) 3 cultural charity foundation focused on Azerbaijan and the rest of the Caucasus region. To summarize our recommendation regarding FY2015 aid to the Turkic nations of Eurasia:

5% of all non-military/security-related foreign aid should be set aside for the need of cultural diplomacy—"the exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding" as defined by the U.S. State Department—and funding should be increased by 50% for all cultural projects in Turkic-populated nations of Eurasia, i.e., Azerbaijan, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan, as well as Turkic autonomous nations of Russian Federation, Ukraine, and Moldova, and Turcomans of Iraq, and Uzbeks and Hazaras of Afghanistan. The funding should benefit Turkic peoples, who are defined as peoples who identify as part of the Turkic world and who speak a language that is part of the Turkic language family. Such peoples include Turks as well as Azerbaijanis, Ahiska (Meskhetian) Turks, Chuvashes, Kazakhs, Tatars, Kyrgyz, Turkmens, Uyghurs, Uzbeks, Bashkirs, Qashqai, Gagauz, Yakuts, Crimean Karaites, Krymchaks, Karakalpaks, Karachays, Balkars, and Nogais people. Projects should include but not be limited to collecting, preserving, and sharing cultural items, which includes preserving and exhibiting artifacts in museums, recording and publicizing oral-history interviews of individuals, supporting artists at work, translation and printing of culturally-significant books, encouraging sister-city relations between the United States and participant nations, sustaining fellowships and exchange programs, and creating opportunities for interactive experiences between and among the participant cultures, which should include Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Funding also should foster the development of democratic civic society by educating IDPs and other citizens of the Turkic world. Job training should

emphasize restoring traditional skills, such as the ancient Turkic rugmaking arts, while allowing fostering sustainable business practices and institutions.

As noted in the “Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy” report by the U.S. Department of State, September 2005, cultural diplomacy “serves as a flexible, universally acceptable vehicle for rapprochement with countries where diplomatic relations have been strained or are absent.”

The Foundation’s successes in connecting Americans with cultural heritage of the Turkic world are revealed in the level of interest and dialogue that follow our programs. Art, music, dance, culinary arts, literature, numismatics, horticulture, and other cultural traditions have allowed our audiences to engage on basic human levels and subsequently to build on that personal engagement. Foundation program participants have pursued additional research in related cultural topics, have taken linguistics courses, have participated in study-abroad programs, have connected with pen pals, and have even traveled to the areas on which our work focuses

Our Azerbaijani participants have expressed appreciation for the Foundation’s empowering their community to serve as their own cultural ambassadors. Of particular interest are the Foundation’s successes in engaging young Azerbaijani-Americans in their heritage.

For confidence-building measures and other measures in the pursuit of peace to take root in the Southern Caucasus and in the Turkic world at large, arts and heritage as well as the narrative of the peoples themselves must play a significant role. The Foundation’s Azerbaijani Oral History Project has captured and preserved dozens of firsthand accounts of modern history from Soviet times through the present.

According to the Switzerland-based Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, some 600,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) exist in Azerbaijan. Thousands uprooted from their homes in Karabakh under occupation for more than 20 years, recognize that cultural traditions are not subsidiary elements of society—they are vital pieces of identity that must be preserved and practiced in order for peoples to survive transplant from their native soil and other traumas.

“There’s a worldwide debate about the relationship between Islam and the West,” said an American official, “and we don’t have a seat at that table.”

—From “Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy,” report by U.S. Department of State, September 2005

As part of the dialogue with the Turkic world, the United States must be willing to go beyond using culture to make ourselves understood and beyond merely helping others to connect via culture. The United States can gain tremendously from being an active

participant and player in cultural-diplomacy initiatives involving the Turkic world. Indeed such initiatives afford low-cost, efficient options for addressing cynicism, disappointment, and resentment that tend to fester when left unattended.

Learning to understand the underpinnings of Turkic culture will provide insights into a vast territory across many boundaries; learning to understand cultural concerns of IDPs is a major step toward conflict resolution. Turkic people and Turkic culture deserve higher visibility in public discourse as well as on Capitol Hill.

In summary, as a leading practitioner of cultural diplomacy between the Turkic world and Americans, the Karabakh Foundation endorses a comprehensive cultural-diplomacy initiative to aid U.S. interests in the Turkic world. The Foundation welcomes the opportunity to extend our expertise in achieving cultural dialogue between and among Turkic entities and the United States.



Lions Clubs International
House State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs
Appropriations Subcommittee, FY 2015

Statement for the Record of Wayne A. Madden
Immediate Past International President, Lions Clubs International (LCI)
February 14, 2014

For more information contact:

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As the Immediate Past President of the world's largest service organization (with 1.4 million members in over 206 countries including 345,000 in the United States), I urge the House State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Subcommittee to provide strong support for foreign assistance programs that are of significant importance for millions of people around the world. Lions Clubs International is dedicated to providing humanitarian, health-related, and poverty-focused development assistance on a global basis, and I urge Congress to invest robustly in the following programs under the jurisdiction of this subcommittee: USAID Global Health Bureau (including the Office of Health, Infectious Diseases and Nutrition and sight-saving activities such as vaccination in child and maternal health, nutrition, vulnerable children, malaria, tuberculosis and neglected tropical disease); USAID Developmental Assistance, as well as maintained funding for vital accounts that provide disaster, refugee and food assistance to world's most vulnerable populations. We also encourage more support for international programs that promote literacy outcomes in low resource settings.

Lions Clubs and its charitable arm, Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF), support and develop international programs and high impact initiatives that serve people who are overwhelmed by poverty, hunger, and disease. Founded in 1968, LCIF has also been a world leader in serving the vision and hearing needs of millions of people in America and around the world. The foundation works collaboratively with many NGOs and intergovernmental organizations such as the World Health Organization, to accomplish shared humanitarian goals. In 2012-2013, LCIF awarded 489 grants totaling \$39.2 million and in 2011-2012, LCIF awarded 513 grants totaling more than \$55 million.

Our members, with the support of the foundation, focus initiatives to address many complex global challenges including measles and rubella, diabetes, tropical diseases that result in blindness, as well as natural disasters. Meeting these challenges in an increasingly changing

world requires strong partnerships between the Federal government's foreign assistance programs and global development partners in the non-profit sector. This is especially true within vulnerable populations where the need is very high.

Global Humanitarian/Disaster Relief

Lions Clubs International and the foundation support Lions member's relief efforts within communities immediately following natural disasters. Lions club members are always available to provide basic necessities such as food, water, clothing and first aid supplies through its Emergency grant program. To date, more than 3,700 Emergency grants have been provided. In the last ten years alone, over \$100 million in disaster-related grants have been awarded to address immediate and long-term needs for victims following disasters.

LCIF and Lions around the world have played key roles in some recent relief efforts. Lions Clubs International Foundation directly provides funds to local Lions to implement disaster relief aid. Lions were among the first to respond during both the 2011 Joplin, Missouri tornado and the 2013 tornado that destroyed Moore, Oklahoma. The Lions worked with local social service organizations, churches, food banks and shelters to address the needs of those displaced by the disasters. Because Lions live in the communities they serve, they have a permanent presence in helping to restore and rebuild these communities. LCIF and Lions delivered similar relief programs during Hurricane Katrina, supporting relief programs in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. And during the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Lions were instrumental in assisting first responders at Ground Zero.

LCIF is presently working with Lions in the Philippines to address victims' needs following the November 2013 typhoon, which impacted more than 9 million people. This local effort is supported by the 380 Lions clubs and 12,600 Lions members in the Philippines. LCIF, with the help of Lions members from around the world has mobilized more than \$2 million for the Philippines disaster relief; in addition to providing critical supplies – hundreds of tents for temporary shelter and water purification units. Lions Clubs International Foundation's history in disaster relief includes \$21 million in funding for the Japan tsunami disaster relief effort; \$15 million for the South Asia Tsunami; \$6 million to Haiti in the aftermath of its earthquake; \$3 million for the China Earthquake; \$5 million for Hurricane Katrina (USA); and \$3 million for September 11th relief (USA). We urge our Federal partners to collaborate with NGO's whenever possible to maximize the impact of this aid.

Lions' SightFirst Programs – The Need to Combat Global Blindness

Initiated in 1990, SightFirst is the Lions humanitarian initiative to combat blindness on a global scale. SightFirst has prevented serious vision loss for more than 30 million people around the world. Accomplishments of SightFirst include: saving the sight of millions of people at an average cost of \$6 per person; establishing hundreds of need-based Lions eye care centers around the globe that provide sight restoration and eye care services; provided treatments to millions of people for river blindness in Africa and Latin America; establishing 34 childhood blindness centers around the world; and training more than 675,000 eye care specialists to provide better or expanded care.

Vaccines and Immunization for Children

Lions Clubs International stands with the GAVI Alliance in efforts to improve life-saving vaccination of children in more than 70 of the world's poorest countries. Each year 22 million children in poor and remote communities do not have access to the most basic vaccines. One in five of all children who die before the age of five lose their lives to vaccine-preventable diseases. We urge the committee to consider its support for vital immunization programs where a small investment can lead to dramatic improvement in peoples' lives.

Cataract Blindness

Cataracts are the leading cause of blindness in the world as 20 million people experience cataract blindness (representing 51% of all cases). Access to cost-effective cataract surgeries, (proven to be one of the most affordable surgical interventions in the world according to WHO), corrects this problem and reverses needless disability, must be improved, especially in under-resourced countries. The SightFirst program awarded \$7.16 million in grants to combat cataract blindness, including funds that underwrote 7.84 million sight-restoring surgeries. Our current focus is on supporting comprehensive eye care solutions through equipment upgrades, facilities improvement, human resource training and hospital management courses. The federal government can make a positive impact on this global problem by drawing attention to human resource and capacity needs in developing countries, and supporting innovative and cost-effective programs and institutions.

Neglected Tropical Diseases

Lions clubs are working toward the elimination of neglected tropical diseases like onchocerciasis (river blindness) and trachoma, the world's most prevalent form of infectious causes of blindness, as public health threats. We support the important work of the World Health Organization, The Carter Center, other international NGOs and partner governments to bring needed therapies to impacted communities. The U.S. Government, through USAID and other agencies, has been an international leader in this fight. Thanks to this leadership, other governments, multilateral agencies and donors have mobilized significant resources and there is now hope that these diseases, and other neglected tropical diseases, will be eliminated as public health threats in the very near future. We commend Congress for its past and current support and call for the maintenance of current allocation levels so that the important work being conducted in the field is not interrupted.

Lions Quest Youth Programs

Over the past 30 years, 13 million young people in 86 countries have benefited from LCIF's principal youth program, Lions Quest. Lions Quest is a comprehensive social and emotional learning (SEL) youth development program that promotes character education, bullying prevention, drug awareness, and service-learning. Lions Quest also promotes a caring, well-managed, and participatory learning environment that allows students to develop 21st century life skills through quality educator training. More than 550,000 educators have been trained in Lions Quest curriculum and methodology around the world equipping students with essential life skills to be successful, well-adjusted adults. Lions Clubs International Foundation has supported Lions Quest program implementation since 1984 through a total of \$20 million in grant funding along with volunteer school support from Lions locally.

Lions Reading Action Program – Addressing Literacy and Access to Education

Lions Clubs International continues to call on its members throughout the world to organize service projects and activities that underscore the importance of reading and address specific needs related to literacy. Hundreds of millions of adults lack basic literacy skills and millions of school-aged children are not able to attend school to obtain those skills. That is why we have created the Lions “Reading Action Program” to help bridge the gaps in literacy and education.

Today we face great foreign policy and humanitarian challenges, and Lions Clubs International understands the importance of foreign assistance in addressing ever-expanding global health, development, and humanitarian relief crises. Our success shows what the service sector can do for economic and social development, and we look forward to working with you and your colleagues on taking up the important challenge of increasing global health and humanitarian services. Thank you. We appreciate the opportunity to provide our perspective.



**THE HONORABLE MICHAEL HEAVICAN
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS,
AND RELATED PROGRAMS
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

APRIL 4, 2014

Thank you Madam Chairwoman and members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to testify regarding judicial reform on behalf of the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). NCSC, in association with the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) and Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA), is seeking your continued support for funding of judicial reform as part of rule of law programs implemented through the United States Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Such programs are critical to building and sustaining democracy abroad, protecting vital U.S. national interests, and fighting corruption, organized crime and terrorism.

NCSC was founded some 40 years ago at the urging of the late-Chief Justice Warren Burger to promote innovation and reform in state judiciaries across the United States and more recently around the globe. Our staff of attorneys and judicial reform specialists provides cutting edge research, education, consulting and knowledge information services that support the justice sector. In 1992, after more than 20 years of working to promote equal, efficient and effective justice in United States state courts, NCSC responded to requests from the international donor community and formed the International Programs Division (NCSC International). NCSC International offers a comprehensive set of resources and a multidisciplinary staff for working with justice systems in developing countries. NCSC provides technical assistance, educational programs, leadership/management training, applied research and technological innovation to help justice systems worldwide strengthen and improve the rule of law.

Let me acknowledge the difficult task before you in making what are clearly difficult decisions regarding budget priorities. The controlling question is: What will the United States gain from funding rule of law programs abroad? Simply put, countries that have stable justice systems can become true democratic partners, not the source of costly conflicts and instability that impact America's global commitments.

Through a variety of programs and efforts, NCSC seeks to promote the rule of law, which is at the heart of our national system of values. NCSC International engages in broad justice sector reform programs in fragile states with weak or divided democratic institutions. These programs are part of an effort to promote political and social stability, to protect the rights of individuals, and to create conditions that foster economic prosperity. NCSC's staff has worked around the world, engaging in comprehensive rule of law projects in Africa and the Middle East, Asia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

In addition to implementing rule of law and judicial reform support programs, our International Visitors Education Program is an important part of our efforts to promote justice system reform and our values as a nation. Through this program we host more than 300 judges and justice system officials annually. We provide training through a combination of briefings and seminars on the U.S. justice system, continuing legal education, and special issues seminars such as judicial independence and relations with the other branches of government. NCSC's unique state-level perspective allows us to advise countries grappling with issues not only related to federalism and decentralization but virtually every aspect of our legal system.

NCSC is currently working in, or has recently worked in, Central America, Nigeria, Egypt, Columbia, Iraq, Haiti, Mexico, South Africa, Kosovo, Serbia, Mongolia, Uganda, and Bangladesh, to name a few countries. We have conducted sector-wide justice reform assessments, assisted with strategic planning and implementation, and provided support to ministries, courts, prosecutors, legal defense institutions, elementary and secondary school systems, national assemblies, and law schools. We have developed sustainable continuing legal education programs for judges and lawyers; supplied infrastructure and software improvements to courts and prosecutors; harmonized criminal procedures and coordination between police, prosecutors, and courts; introduced small-claims courts and alternative dispute resolution services; trained court administrators, lawyers, and prosecutors; implemented multi-media public awareness and access to justice initiatives; and assisted national assemblies by improving their legislative drafting processes.

NCSC utilizes a number of tools customized to provide justice system agencies with quick assistance. For example, the Center has developed an integrated, automated court case management system that is sufficiently "generic" to allow for rapid customization and implementation of case management functions on a variety of platforms. Our CourTools® performance management system has been adapted in other countries, such as Kosovo, to give local leaders a set of tools to assess performance of the court system. As a result, judges and court leaders are able to gain insight into the functioning of their courts and implement changes that improve access, timeliness, efficiency and ethics in light of objective data. Having maintained a continued presence in Kosovo since 2001, NCSC's efforts have helped Kosovo with the transition from international to local control; assisted in reforming and restructuring the courts and prosecutorial system to promote effective and impartial justice; and improved the efficiency of court operations both administratively and jurisdictionally.

Examples of other initiatives NCSC has implemented on behalf of U.S. Government agencies and in furtherance of US government goals include:

- NCSC is also currently implementing a five-year USAID judicial reform and government accountability project in Serbia. The objectives of the project are to strengthen the rule of law, and the independence of the judiciary and the administration of justice in Serbia; to increase public awareness of reforms in the judicial sector; and to strengthen the ability of the Serbian government, Independent Agencies, and civil society to detect and prevent corruption.
- In Bangladesh, NCSC is supporting citizens' access to justice by improving the legal framework for legal aid services, improving the legal aid services provided to the public, increasing the public's understanding of legal aid and legal services, and further developing their ability to evaluate the performance of judges.
- NCSC is working in Uganda to improve the systems for adjudication of land disputes and the systems that administer the records of lands and property. These disputes are a major driver of conflict in Uganda, and improving the administration of land dispute resolution systems will have a significant impact on the reduction of conflict in Uganda.
- In Nigeria, NCSC is working with the National Judicial Council of Nigeria to implement an electronic case management system, build institutional capacity to govern complicated projects, and improve communication software.
- In Central America, NCSC is currently coordinating law enforcement training with INL in Belize, Honduras, Guatemala, and Panama to improve capacity in this important field.
- In the Caribbean Basin, NCSC is managing training efforts to improve capacity of justice sector institutions as well as juvenile justice.
- In Egypt, NCSC is working with DRL to empower civil society to improve access to justice.
- NCSC is working with the National Judicial Council of Iraq to improve training programs for judges and staff.

NCSC and our colleague organizations share one ambition: to improve the lives of people through justice system reform in an effort to promote political stability, social harmony, and economic prosperity. We bear witness to the impact U.S.-funded rule of law programs have had abroad in strengthening justice systems.

Alexander Hamilton observed that a judiciary's legitimacy rests solely in the goodness and integrity of its judgment. The same may be said for a legal system and every other aspect of governing. This requires more than good legislators, executives or judges. It requires the entire system to be oriented towards constant innovation and improvement in the administration of justice broadly defined.

Madam Chairwoman, on behalf of NCSC, I urge that this Committee continue to support and expand efforts by the Department of State and USAID to strengthen judicial reform programs as part of an overall emphasis on rule of law. Continued investments in judicial reform

as part of rule of law programs abroad will save America from costly interventions in far-away places. Above all, U.S. support for rule of law programs abroad will demonstrate our nation's on-going commitment to promoting the rights of all citizens and opening the opportunities of democracy to everyone.



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The Next Step in Changing the World

April 4, 2014

TO: The Honorable Kay Granger
 The Honorable Nita Lowey
 Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs
 HT-2 Capitol Building
 Washington, DC 20515

FROM: Glenn Blumhorst
 President
 National Peace Corps Association

Dear Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member Lowey,

I write to urge the Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs to support an appropriation of \$400 million for the Peace Corps in Fiscal Year 2015.

In September 2013, the world watched in horror as gunmen occupied an upscale shopping mall in Nairobi, Kenya, killing dozens and wounding nearly 200. Amid the violence and the chaos, the Kenya Red Cross was immediately on the scene, providing resources, support and comfort to the victims.

Three months prior to this tragedy, the President of the Kenya Red Cross Society, Dr. Mohamud Sheikh Nurein Said, was on Capitol Hill meeting with congressional leaders as the 2013 winner of the National Peace Corps Association's Harris Wofford Global Citizen Award. Dr. Said was accompanied by Kenya Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Russell Morgan, one of the Peace Corps Volunteers who nearly fifty years earlier inspired Dr. Said to pursue a lifelong career of serving others.

Since 1961 and to this day, there are literally tens of thousands of stories – large and small – of individuals across the globe whose lives were changed for the better because of the Peace Corps. These are stories of friendship, individual and community empowerment, improving livelihoods and saving lives.

Collectively, these stories are very difficult to quantify. **But what is not difficult to quantify is this: At a cost of less than \$1.20 per person/per year, the Peace Corps is America's best bargain.**

National Peace Corps Association 1 of 5 April 4, 2014
 House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs
 Fiscal Year 2015 Written Testimony

As the House of Representatives considers a Fiscal Year 2015 budget that proposes a return to increased defense spending¹, we respectfully suggest that a modest investment in the cause of peace is equally warranted.

With an Acting Director of the Peace Corps awaiting a final (and an expected unanimous) confirmation vote in the Senate, we respectfully suggest that she and her team be provided adequate support to move the agency forward with key initiatives allowing the Peace Corps to continue meeting development challenges of the 21st century.

A Return to \$400 Million: We applaud you and your Senate counterparts for providing Peace Corps with a Fiscal Year 2014 appropriation of \$379 million – the agency's first funding increase in four years. While this is a positive step forward, it is important to note that when adjusted for inflation, this appropriation remains \$50 million below the buying power that might have been achieved, had Congress maintained a pathway of support set forth with its \$400 million Peace Corps appropriation in FY 2010.² A return in FY 2015 to \$400 million will continue to allow for a necessary course correction on a variety of fronts:

- **Volunteer Recruitment:** One of the stated goals of Acting Peace Corps Director Carrie Hessler-Radelet is to re-energize volunteer recruitment efforts to identify and engage the very best possible candidates for Peace Corps service. Last year, a new application system was launched to allow prospective volunteers to assess the status of their application. Efforts are also underway to shorten and streamline the application process, including giving candidates for service more input in their country selection.³ In an address at the National Press Club to mark the 53rd anniversary of the Executive Order that established the Peace Corps, Hessler-Radelet said the following:

"...we're revitalizing recruitment and outreach so that every American knows about the Peace Corps. We want to re-ignite the passion that characterized Peace Corps' early days – not just among Volunteers, who are already passionate – but among the American public writ large. So we're expanding our recruitment staff, embracing new media platforms for telling our story, and casting a wider net than ever before. I've challenged my recruitment team to double the number of applications we receive – not just to grow our reach, but to field a Volunteer force that reflects the rich diversity of the American people, and represents the very best of the United States."

¹ Ryan Budget Calls for Return to Pre-Sequester Defense Spending – National Journal, April 1, 2014

² Bureau of Labor Statistics, CPI inflation calculator. \$400 million in 2010 has the same buying power as \$430.68 million in 2014.

³ Peace Corps 2015 Congressional Budget Justification, page viii

The current Peace Corps applicant to volunteer ratio stands at approximately three-to-one.⁴ The initiatives outlined above will certainly result in a significant jump in applications. The question we confront is whether the Peace Corps – and Congress – will meet the placement needs for additional, excellent volunteers or face the prospect of having to inform hundreds of highly qualified individuals from across the country that they cannot be accepted into service in a timely manner due to a lack of funds.

- **Country Requests:** If more Peace Corps Volunteers are accepted into service, is there room for expansion? The answer is absolutely yes. For far too many years, the agency has had to turn away requests from interested nations to have Peace Corps Volunteers. As many as twenty countries have reportedly seen such requests go unfulfilled, and the opening (or re-opening) of Peace Corps programs in new countries has slowed considerably in the last 2 – 3 years. At the same time, many nations that have current programs have petitioned the Peace Corps to send more volunteers.
- **Volunteers in the Field:** As recently as four years ago the number of Peace Corps Volunteers and trainees in the field was approaching 9,000. However current figures project those numbers are now hovering at or below 7,000.⁵ This decline of approximately 20% comes after a period in which the agency had reached a forty-year high, and corresponds directly with reductions in funding.
- **Volunteer Health, Safety and Security:** Both the Peace Corps and the Congress emphasize the importance of ensuring the health, safety and security of Peace Corps Volunteers. At the same time, it is imperative that Congress provide sufficient funding to ensure that improvements can be carried out. The agency continues to address the requirements of the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act. With an Office of Victim Advocacy and trained sexual assault liaisons at each post, a much improved response infrastructure is in place. These improvements are part of the final stages of agency implementation of its Sexual Assault Risk Reduction and Response Program. At the same time, the Peace Corps and the National Peace Corps Association have been involved with the group Health Justice for Peace Corps Volunteers to explore agency improvements and privately supported efforts to address the challenges long-term health issues or injuries that occur during service.

In addition to the items outlined above, there are a number of other reasons why returning Peace Corps funding to \$400 million is warranted:

⁴ Based on Peace Corps statistics for Fiscal Year 2013

⁵ Peace Corps 2015 Congressional Budget Justification. Peace Corps Authorizations and Appropriations FY 1962-FY2014, pages 5-6

- **Private Investment:** It is imperative that public funds continue to provide the necessary infrastructure and baseline support for a strong and successful Peace Corps. At the same time, it is important to note that this modest public investment has been triggering millions of dollars of private support to address grassroots development: 1) Across the nation, Returned Peace Corps Volunteers have self-organized into groups based on the community where they now live or the country where they served. Approximately 140 National Peace Corps Association member groups – found in at least forty states, serve as engines of charity and volunteerism that not only support projects overseas, but also community needs here at home. 2) Thousands of small-scale development projects of serving volunteers are not funded by taxpayer dollars, but rather supported through the privately funded Peace Corps Partnership Program. Over the past five years, nearly 4,000 of these projects have generated more than \$10 million in private investment, providing benefit to an estimated 4.5 million individuals. 3) Most recently, the National Peace Corps Association, the Peace Corps agency and Google joined in an innovative collaboration through which 1,000 Nexus 7 tablets donated by Google are being strategically provided to selected Peace Corps programs to further enhance the development work of volunteers.

We strongly believe that these examples of support for the Peace Corps through private funds should be recognized and strengthened through further public investment.

- **Strategic Partnerships:** In addition to private initiatives, the agency continues to build effective partnerships with other U.S. government agencies to address key international development objectives. A significant collaboration with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) continues in 28 countries. At the same time, more than 3,000 Volunteers are working in 22 programs across Africa to help advance the President's Malaria Initiative. Addressing food security through the Feed the Future Initiative enables Peace Corps Volunteers to receive training and resources in partnership with the U.S. Agency for International Development. In all of these cases, Volunteers provide a grassroots, community-based presence which leads to further innovation and long-term effectiveness in addressing these major development initiatives.
- **Meaningful Jobs/Meaningful Skills:** It is always important to note, especially at a time of high unemployment, that Peace Corps volunteers who are serving our nation overseas are American citizens who are gaining many significant technical and interpersonal skills that benefit the individual, not to mention the future employer, when s/he returns home and joins our workforce. Many of these volunteers enter professions that serve our communities. A 2011 commissioned survey found that 33 percent of RPCVs in the last decade became involved in education. An equal number entered the non-profit sector, while 15 percent of RPCVs entered the field of health care.

In her recent National Press Club remarks, Acting Director Hessler-Radelet recalled a recent conversation with Alpha Conde, the President of Guinea, during which he said the following:

"I had a Peace Corps Volunteer teacher who was the first person I can remember who believed I had a future outside the boundaries of my village...When it came time for me to take my national exams, I passed. I was one of four people that year who qualified for university. I am certain I would not be President today if not for his support and encouragement. And he is a lifelong friend to this day..."

"By (Peace Corps') presence, you tell my people that Americans care about them – that my people are so important to you that you are willing to travel thousands of miles from home to learn our language, eat our food (even though it makes your bellies sick), work with us on our priorities. Your being there validates my people even more than the millions of dollars of foreign assistance your country sends my country every year. My people are proud to teach you their language, their way of life, their culture. They are proud to call you family. You give them a hand up, not a hand out. And that makes all the difference."

The National Peace Corps Association strongly urges you and your congressional colleagues to continue to allow the Peace Corps to "make all the difference". For individuals across the globe, for Volunteers who want the opportunity to serve our nation, and for communities in our country who benefit when those Volunteers come home.

Thank you for your consideration of this request for \$400 million for the Peace Corps in Fiscal Year 2015.

April 2,, 2014

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chair
Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, D.C.

Dear Chairman Granger:

On behalf of the Nature Conservancy and its one million members, please find attached below our testimony for the record to your Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations, in support of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 budget of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and other programs that benefit conservation in developing countries.

USAID is the largest single source of U.S. Government support to international conservation -- \$212.5 million was appropriated for FY 2014. As part of a large alliance of conservation groups, the Conservancy supports a FY2015 appropriation of at least the recent \$212.5 million level; this should be as a separate line item. Better conservation of natural resources is necessary for sustainable development and peace. Natural systems upon which people depend are under ever-increasing pressure worldwide, but especially in the developing countries. The chances of ecological disasters are rising. There is a poaching crisis in Africa, with national security implications, and the Congress under your leadership has responded with a special item of \$45 million to help fight such trafficking. Natural resource scarcity and misuse continue to be key sources of conflict. Many countries are too poor to do an adequate job of conservation. They need increased outside help. If they do not get help now, we Americans will pay part of the price, through interventions that will likely prove difficult, costly and dangerous.

We urge the Committee to provide firm legislative leadership, directing USAID to continue making conservation a high priority in FY2015, continuing at the \$212.5 million level of funding and the special funding for wildlife trafficking, in a context of defending overall U.S. foreign assistance at levels that reflect U.S. global leadership. We also urge that the Committee support at least the full U.S. quota level to the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and to appropriate international climate assistance in line with U.S. Government pledges and developing-country needs.

Sincerely,

Kameron Onley
Director of U. S. Government Relations
Cc: The Honorable Nita Lowey, Ranking Member



**TESTIMONY ON FISCAL YEAR 2015- HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS**

4th April 2014

Michael Sheldrick
Global Policy and Advocacy Manager
Global Poverty Project
Michael.sheldrick@globalpovertyproject.com

On behalf of the Global Poverty Project, I submit written testimony in support of the Global Partnership for Education's request for increased funding for Fiscal Year 2015. Details of the relevant account are as follows:

Account:

Title III. Bilateral Economic Assistance
United States Agency for International Development
Development Assistance

Funding Requested: \$50,000,000

Funding History:

Fiscal Year 2012 Actual:	\$ 20,000,000
Fiscal Year 2013 Actual:	\$ 20,000,000*
Fiscal Year 2014 Actual:	\$ TBD
Fiscal Year 2015 Administration:	\$ TBD
Fiscal Year 2015 Proposed:	\$ 50,000,000

*Estimate

Background of US investment

The US has on average investment \$20,000,000 per annum in the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). The GPE has in turn been able to invest in programs that have resulted in 22 million more children being in school, significant increases in attendance by girls, the training of more than 300,000 teachers, and on average a 10% increase in domestic budget commitments to education by partner countries.

www.GlobalPovertyProject.com

Global Poverty Project
594 Broadway, suite 207
New York, New York 10012

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Rationale for increasing US support for GPE to \$50,000,000 in Fiscal Year 2015

A fiscal year 2015 contribution from the United States to the GPE is needed to support its newly approved four year program to support 29 million children (23 million of these children will reside in fragile and conflict affected states) in primary and lower secondary schools.

Despite significant gains in reducing the number of out of school children over the past decade, 110 million in 2000 down to 57 million children in 2013, too many children continue to be denied the right to primary education. Additionally, more than two hundred fifty million children leave primary school after only 3-4 years without basic literacy or numeracy skills, further denying them the opportunity to achieve their potential in life. GPE has proven successful in supporting an additional 22 million children to attend and remain in better-equipped and supported schools since 2002. In GPE countries, the primary school completion rate rose from 56 percent to 71 percent between 2000 and 2010; and, upon joining the GPE partnership, developing countries have increased their domestic financing for education as a share of GDP by 10 percent. It's expected that an additional \$16,000,000,000 in domestic financing could be leveraged by GPE grants for basic education over the next four years, dramatically strengthening the capacity of national education programs around the world.

Other donor countries contribute millions more to the GPE than the US. For example, the UK, Australia, Denmark and the Netherlands each pledged more than \$120,000,000 over the last three years. As the world's largest economy, the US should be contributing its fair share. This is especially the case given that aid to "basic" education in low-income countries is reducing faster than in other areas. Between 2010 and 2011 alone, aid to basic education fell 6.3 %, from \$6.2 billion to \$5.8 billion, considerably more than the 3% reduction in total aid over the same period. In total, cuts made over the 2010 to 2011 period to the lowest income countries could have sent 1.1 million more children to school.

Finally, the GPE has stated that given the increasing demand from developing countries, it is clear that donor countries will need to raise their ambition levels above 'business-as-usual'. The GPE estimates that raising funding above current levels to a more "ambitious" level could support a rise to 92% global student enrollment by 2018.

Now is not the time for donor countries – including the US – to shy away from making bold financial commitments in support of education in the coming years.

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TESTIMONY OF
KAMERAN ONLEY
DIRECTOR OF U.S. GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
THE NATURE CONSERVANCY
SUBMITTED TO
THE
HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE AND FOREIGN OPERATIONS
MARCH 19, 2014

The Nature Conservancy thanks the Committee for its strong support to international conservation and urges the Committee to continue this tradition by appropriating in FY 2015 at least the FY2014 levels. This would mean \$212.5 million for conservation of biodiversity within the Development Assistance and Economic Support Funds accounts of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID); an amount for the Global Environment facility (GEF) at least equal to the anticipated annual pledge level; a continuation of the \$45 million special item (first voted in FY2014) to support the fight against wildlife trafficking especially of elephant ivory and rhino horn; and appropriate funding for international climate action.

Foreign assistance has been an important part of U.S. international policy since the Marshall Plan more than sixty years ago. Support for such assistance draws upon many sources, including the innate generosity of the American people in the face of acute needs in poor countries. But it also reflects a consensus that such assistance is in our own national interest. I could cite many leaders over many years, but will for brevity quote only one. In a hearing on March 12, 2013, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper said *"Many countries important to the United States are vulnerable to natural resource shocks that degrade environment, frustrate attempts to democratize, raise the risk of regime-threatening instability, and aggravate regional tensions."*

We agree, and we urge the Committee to consider this expert view as it allocates the foreign assistance budget for FY2015.

The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to preserve the lands and waters upon which all life depends. Our work in the United States and abroad is closely related. A healthy natural environment is crucial to genuinely sustainable economic and social development. Too often, short-term considerations drive bad choices, whose results can be catastrophic for both the natural world and for the people who live by means of that world. A healthy and sustainable environment promotes peace and security. The United States and the world need national security, we need economic security, we need food security, we need what is being called "human security" in all its aspects – and these require, at the most fundamental level, a healthy and sustainable natural world.

Climate change will make many current bad trends worse. Natural systems not only need help to adjust to climate change -- they can sometimes be part of the solution to climate change.

For example “green infrastructure” can mitigate storm surges and sequester carbon that would otherwise go into the atmosphere. Climate assistance accounts merit and should receive continued investments in line with U.S. government pledges and global needs.

The Conservancy supports local conservation groups in the developing world that work to raise the effective level of protection at parks and nature preserves established by the local governments. We work with local communities to increase the constituency for conservation. We support sustainable development projects to create jobs and improve the productivity and standard of living of rural people. Our work with village-controlled marine protected areas in the islands of East Asia has shown that improved conservation can raise local incomes significantly. We are working cooperatively with landowners in Africa to promote conservation on private lands and keep migration routes open for large mammals. This work in Northern Kenya has helped improve grazing, improve local incomes and (through the deterrent effects of armed guards at locally managed land conservancies) improve security against Somali raiders from across the border. Local people say that they no longer have to “sleep with their shoes on” from fear of such raiders.

We are a private, non-profit organization. Our last private capital fund campaign raised more than \$1 billion, more than \$100 million of that for our international work. But peer-reviewed research has shown that funding shortfalls in international conservation are much larger than even the Conservancy, and our allies in the conservation movement, can realistically raise. Governments must help on a much larger scale or the conservation mission is likely to fail and the world’s people will suffer the consequences. Fortunately, governments are stepping up to this challenge. Norway has pledged \$2.5 billion over five years for forest conservation in the developing countries; this pledge makes Norway the world’s largest donor to conservation. The German government has started a new international conservation fund. The Conservancy has established a presence in Europe where our staff, working with local groups, are urging the European governments to do more -- and with success.

We urge the Committee to provide firm legislative guidance to USAID, directing the Agency to maintain enhanced conservation of natural resources as a mission essential to the long-term and sustainable development of the world. We urge you to instruct the Agency to actively promote large regional conservation programs. Experience has shown that such programs, including current work in the Congo and Amazon basins, and the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI), are often the most efficient way to address problems that do not respect national borders.

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is the world’s largest source of funding to global environmental and conservation issues. About one-third of its investments are in conservation. Each dollar of the U.S. quota is leveraged by four dollars from other donor countries, and then further leveraged by local countries’ match, so that the final leverage on U.S. appropriated funds is very great – by some calculations, as high as 50 to 1. This is a degree of leverage not obtainable in any other way, and merits continued support to the GEF.

Thank you this opportunity to submit testimony for the record.



It starts with vision.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY FOR THE RECORD

House Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Submitted by: Jenny Hourihan, Chief Executive Officer, Orbis International

April 2, 2014

I thank the Chairwoman, the Ranking Member, the Members of the Subcommittee and their staff for this opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of Orbis International and our beneficiaries across the globe that benefit every day from the partnership and support that Orbis has received from the United States government, via the US Agency for International Development (USAID). Specifically, we would be grateful if the Subcommittee could include in its FY15 appropriations bill \$3 million for the Child Blindness program, \$25 million for the American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA) program, and \$100 million for Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD) programs for the developing world.

Introduction:

Orbis International is a US-based global health organization dedicated to eliminating avoidable blindness in the developing world. Created in 1982 through a public/private partnership between USAID and a small group of committed US philanthropists, Orbis has conducted more than 1,000 programs in 90 countries, trained more than 330,000 healthcare professionals, and touched the lives of nearly 24 million children and adults. In 2012 alone, Orbis trained more than 20,000 doctors, nurses, and other eye care professionals as well as conducted more than 4.5 million medical and optical treatments for adults and children, including 55,549 surgeries.

Orbis provides the tools, training and technology necessary for local partners in the developing world to understand their needs and develop workable and lasting solutions to unnecessary blindness. By building their long-term capacity, primarily through training of ophthalmologists and other eye health and eye care professionals, Orbis enables its partner institutions to take action by reaching a state where they can provide, on their own, quality eye care services that are affordable, accessible and sustainable.



It starts with vision.

Continued partnership and opportunity for funding from USAID is very important to Orbis as it continues to strengthen, expand and fulfill its mission under the affirmation, "It starts with vision." The critical interests to Orbis are the continued efforts by Congress to fulfill the commitment made by our country and USAID to invest in (1) the Child Blindness program at the level of \$3 million, (2) the American Schools and Hospitals Abroad program at \$25 million, and (3) the Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD) programs at the FY14 level of \$100 million.

USAID Funding – Child Blindness Program

USAID's former-A2Z Micronutrient and Childhood Blindness Project was of great importance to Orbis and helped fund critical research and leverage existing funds for projects in countries like Ethiopia. Orbis, as one of the first international eye care organizations to introduce an integrated approach for the prevention and treatment of childhood blindness in developing countries, consistently seeks to improve and expand its approach in building the capacity of local partner institutions to make quality pediatric eye care services available and accessible in their communities. Continued funding from USAID has helped to contribute to our efforts to eliminate the debilitating and needless health crisis of preventable or treatable childhood blindness, and we hope that additional program funding will be forthcoming to move us forward in countries such as India, Zambia, Ethiopia, Mongolia and China.

Orbis is thankful to the Subcommittee for the \$2.5M for Child Blindness in the FY14 allocated under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014. Despite this program's absence from the President's budget since FY13, these funds remain incredibly vital, as they are the *only* dedicated funds in USAID for the prevention and treatment of childhood blindness and the restoration of sight. While grants from this program are typically small, they enable existing dollars to have greater impact, leverage and depth of reach, as well as fund research and evaluation critical to measuring success. Since the program's inception through a 1991 Congressional directive, more than 31 eye care and health non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have received grants totaling approximately \$30 million to implement eye care interventions in 58 countries.

Orbis hopes Congress will continue its commitment to this program and demonstrate its continued understanding of the impact and pervasiveness of blindness among children in the developing world. Investments in avoidable blindness and visual impairment offer many of the greatest economic and social returns in global health, while dramatically improving the quality of life of individuals and families. More than 90% of the world's blind live in the developing world where access to eye care is extremely limited or not available. This includes a disproportionate number of women, as nearly two-thirds of the world's blind are women – due to high cost of surgery, inability to travel to a surgical facility, and lack of access to information and resources (International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness). Millions of people suffer needlessly, but USAID's Child Blindness funding allows us to provide some relief.



It starts with vision.

USAID Funding – American Schools and Hospitals Abroad

Funding from USAID's American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA) program has been of particular importance to Orbis. ASHA's initial funding helped enable the creation of the world's first Flying Eye Hospital (FEH), a DC-8 converted into a one-of-a-kind airborne ophthalmic teaching facility that has crossed the globe. The Orbis FEH is a hospital with wings that brings together dedicated eye care professionals and aviators to give the gift of sight to developing countries around the world. Onboard the FEH, local doctors, nurses and technicians work alongside Orbis International's medical team of volunteer faculty to exchange knowledge and improve skills. In the 48-seat classroom at the front of the plane, doctors gather for lectures, discussions and live broadcasts of surgical procedures being performed on-board the FEH operating room. If needed, surgeries can also be broadcast to an additional classroom outside the aircraft, for instance, at a nearby hospital. Large numbers of trainees observe the surgeries and ask questions of the operating surgeons via a two-way audio-visual system.

In 1992, with the retirement of the DC-8, Orbis again benefitted from USAID funding through ASHA to build the 2nd generation Flying Eye Hospital, which is housed in a converted DC-10 aircraft. In 2013, Orbis launched its 3rd generation FEH, supported by USAID's \$1.2M ASHA grant. Orbis is retrofitting a donated MD-10-30 and this 3rd generation aircraft will allow Orbis to have greater geographical range, enhanced technology and reduced operating costs. Over the last 29 years, the FEH has traveled to 89 countries positively affecting the lives of millions.

Increasing the ASHA budget to \$25 million would allow for an increased number of grants to be awarded at a higher level for those capital improvements that benefit numerous countries, providing access to costly education and medical services. Recipients often have shown strong evidence of successful and ongoing public and private partnership. In a time when dollars are strained and our nation needs to be strategic in its investment, it makes sense to support and strengthen those programs where partnerships are strong, successful, and dollars are leveraged to increase in-country capacity, as well as provide improved education and health care to those in developing countries.

USAID Funding – Neglected Tropical Disease

Orbis is a leader in the global fight against trachoma, a Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD) in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region (SNNRP) of Ethiopia, a potential country for expansion of USAID's NTD Control program. Ethiopia has the highest prevalence of trachoma in the world. Trachoma is the world's leading cause of infectious blindness, with more than nine million children (two in every five children) between the ages of one and nine suffering from active infections and 1.3 million adults suffering from trichiasis, its blinding form. Due to limited access to safe water (only 22% of Ethiopians have access to safe water) and poor sanitation (only 13% have adequate sanitation), this disease is extremely widespread and difficult to prevent without large scale, comprehensive interventions. In the SNNRP, Orbis is the only implementer of the World Health Organization's recommended "SAFE" (Surgery, Antibiotics, Face washing and Environment) strategy for trachoma. Our work in Ethiopia has saved the sight of millions of people.



It starts with vision.

The inclusion of \$100 million for NTD in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 marks an important benchmark for Orbis's efforts in Ethiopia. Although outside USAID's current NTD geographic focus, USAID indicated in 2010 that its NTD focus would expand to Ethiopia should the NTD program be funded at \$100 million. The expansion will allow Orbis to partner with USAID, leveraging existing relationships, impacting more lives, and magnifying the progress being made in the fight against trachoma. Additionally, it will help leverage existing investments made by other national governments including funding from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development that allows Orbis to serve as a coordinator of NGOs dealing with trachoma. We hope that this expansion be allowed to reach its full potential through level funding for this program at \$100 million for FY15.

Conclusion

In closing, blindness has profound human and socioeconomic consequences. There are 39 million blind people in the world today, among 285 million people in the world who are visually impaired; according to the World Health Organization (WHO), 80 percent of all visual impairment can be avoided or cured. The costs of lost productivity and of rehabilitation and education of the blind constitute a significant economic burden for the individual, the family and society. Investments in avoidable blindness and visual impairment offer many of the greatest economic and social returns in global health, while dramatically improving the quality of life of individuals and families. Our programs and partnerships provide the skills, infrastructure and on-going support to build the capacity and skills necessary to sustain care at a local level. As a founding member of Vision 2020: The Right to Sight, a campaign led by the World Health Organization and other leading blindness prevention organizations to eliminate avoidable blindness by the year 2020, Orbis is dedicated to working in partnership to create a world free of needless blindness.

**STATEMENT BY
AMBASSADOR JAMES F. COLLINS
FORMER UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR
TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

**ON THE PROGRAM OF RESEARCH AND TRAINING FOR EASTERN EUROPE
AND THE INDEPENDENT STATES OF THE FORMER SOVIET UNION (TITLE VIII)**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON FOREIGN OPERATIONS,
EXPORT FINANCING, AND RELATED PROGRAMS
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
U. S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

APRIL 4, 2014

Madam Chairwoman:

I am pleased to have the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Program of Research and Training for Eastern Europe and the Independent States of the Former Soviet Union, known as the Title VIII program. The Title VIII program is administered by the Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research. I request that the Committee recommend \$3.5 million in funding for this authorized program in fiscal year 2015. I also want to express my deep gratitude to the Subcommittee for its longstanding bipartisan support of Title VIII.

At no time in recent memory has the need for experts on Russia and the Former Soviet Union been clearer.

Events in Ukraine and the Crimean Peninsula are reaffirming to the United States and to the world that Russia and East Europe remain a critical and challenging factor for the security of the United States and our allies and a central element in our foreign policy and diplomacy. And yet, even as these relationships again take center stage for America and our allies, we are facing the danger of degradation in American expertise about this region.

Analysts have called attention to the dangers allowing our capability in this region to continue (New York Times, March 6, 2014), and I want to add my own voice to those urging action to address this issue.

The Title VIII Program has long been our country's most effective mechanism for creating and sustaining high-quality American expertise on Russia and the Former Soviet Union. The program has produced specialists who today work throughout academia, government, and the private sector. They are members of the key institutions conducting the business of America with the societies in this region and the serve daily in advisory roles in our Department of State, National Security Council, and beyond.

The pool of talent we rely on for these services is in need of steady replenishment and the time has come for the United States to reiterate its support for the program that assures the survival of this critical national resource.

At the outset, let me say that I receive no funding or other tangible support from the Title VIII program. I speak to this committee on behalf of the program because of my deep conviction that it benefits the attainment of U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives. I was honored to serve my country for nearly 12 years during the period America addressed critical issues that emerged from the end of the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the beginning of the transition of the former communist societies of East Europe and Eurasia. I am now a Senior Associate and Resident Diplomat in the Russia and Eurasia Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

HISTORY OF TITLE VIII

Madam Chairwoman, from its inception the Title VIII program has developed and sustained a cadre of experts on the societies and nations of Central and Eastern Europe and the vast and complex region that we formerly knew as the Soviet Union. The Title VIII program, now entering its fourth decade, was enacted into law in 1983 at the height of the Cold War.

Today, as that era recedes and new nations and politico-economic forces reshape the East and Central Europe and Eurasia, Title VIII programs ensure that the American retains vital area expertise, linguistic capabilities, and knowledge of the region's increasingly diverse societies to ensure that our policymaking, conduct of relations, and engagement with this vital region are informed and based on solid understanding.

The Title VIII program is carried out through a number of functional activities that include: collaborative research involving American academics and policy analysts and their counterparts in the Eurasian and East European region; individual field research opportunities for American academic and policy analysts; language training in regional languages for American students and others making career commitments to the study and conduct of policy of and on the region; direct placement of American experts from the academic community in U.S. agencies and embassies; and seminars and publications produced for executive and legislative officials in Washington responsible for the conduct of U.S. policy toward the region.

The Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) administers the program, and based on my experience they have done a fine job in managing a program that has sustained intellectual resources absolutely vital to our interests and security. But, this last year, in what those of us committed to maintaining our national capability on Eurasia and East Europe considered a serious blow to that effort, the Title VIII Program received no funding in fiscal year 2013 from the Department of State despite Congress's authorization for the program.. We seek to rectify this situation for fiscal year 2014 and fiscal year 2015.

TITLE VIII PROGRAM

Grants under Title VIII go to a wide variety of U.S. organizations. These organizations design and administer competitions to ensure scarce funds go to the most promising programs and individuals. These organizations draw on experts from throughout the United States to evaluate the merits of individual and institutional proposals. Fairness in selection is assured through strict adherence to peer review procedures; selection committee members serve as experts familiar with the standards of quality governing research and writing in their fields and not as representatives of their educational or research institutions.

Teachers, researchers and students from over 500 universities and research institutions in the United States have received support under the Title VIII program. All recipients of Title VIII research funding are U.S. citizens: they come from every state in the United States and the District of Columbia.

The program is also extremely cost-effective because the national organizations administering Title VIII programs and the home institutions of grant recipients under the program in a variety of ways share costs of funded programs and individuals.

The argument for continuing the Title VIII program can be put simply. Prudent policy making on these critical areas of the world requires trained analysts and experts working in government and a reservoir of expertise in academic and research communities on which our officials can draw. It also depends on a sustaining the capabilities required to train the next generation of scholars and public servants who will maintain our expertise and knowledge base on this region. This bank of expertise consists of senior scholars and researchers as well as those just embarking on their careers.

The Title VIII program has thousands of alumni in academia, the private sector and government. It has undeniable benefits for the practical crafting and conduct of foreign assistance programs in the region. For example, Title VIII-funded scholars and researchers have long helped administrations from both parties to develop U.S. foreign assistance programs for Eurasian and Central and East European countries. Graduates of these programs have also played significant roles in the expansion of U.S. business and trade with the countries of the region.

The program has a number of notable alumni including two former Secretaries of State, Madeleine Albright and Condoleezza Rice. Other individuals have served as USAID project directors, National Security Council staff, and Departments of State and Defense advisors. Title VIII Scholars have briefed many current and former U.S. Ambassadors and State Department officials. Title VIII alumni have also helped Congress make difficult decisions on foreign assistance to the region through testimony before congressional committees.

Title VIII research is often immediately applicable to U.S. foreign policy and foreign assistance goals in the region. Current research on such issues as human rights and legal reform in Russia, The dynamics of Ukraine's search for a secure future, the changing role of Islam among the region's large Muslim population, and the continued development Russian policy

under President Putin's leadership are clearly relevant to ongoing policy and technical assistance objectives and projects as demonstrated by federal agencies' direct interest in working with Title VIII-funded researchers.

CONTINUED NEED FOR TITLE VIII

Continued support for Title VIII is a critical element of the nation's security for two reasons.

First, there is no future in which events in Eurasia and Central and Eastern Europe will not be critical to America's ability to achieve foreign policy goals in Europe, the Middle East and Asia. We need only look at the place this region played as we pursued our goals in Afghanistan, Georgia, Iran, Iraq, North Korea, or Ukraine. This validates the need for effective research and analysis that assure our policy makers the best information and understanding available as they craft our country's approaches to this region and its nations.

This year has brought tension between the United States and Russia on a number of critical foreign policy issues, including over developments in Libya and Syria, core principles of the security system in Europe, and Ukraine: the termination of the USAID mission in Moscow and the impending suspension of the Nunn Lugar program will call for new thinking about the content and conduct of our bilateral relations with Russia's people and government. And new international challenges, including on economic and cross-border security issues will ensure that our ability to work constructively with Russia and the other states of this region will grow more vital.

Second, as our country has responded to security threats from terrorism, the need for strengthened language capabilities and quality research capacity on the diverse cultures and nations in this region has become ever more apparent. The Title VIII program constitutes one of the few sustained U.S. investments aimed at developing and maintaining our national capability for the highest quality analysis and policy research on the states and societies of the Former Soviet Union and Southeast Europe.

As we address the challenges of the 21st century, Title VIII continues to adapt to evolving geopolitical environments and encourages American researchers to connect their projects to the work of the policy community and to countries and regions outside the traditional Cold War framework.

CONCLUSION

Madam Chairwoman, I urge the members of the Subcommittee to continue their longstanding bipartisan support of the Program of Research and Training for Eastern Europe and the Independent States of the Former Soviet Union (Title VIII). I specifically recommend that the Subcommittee provide \$3.5 million in support for the authorized Title VIII program in fiscal year 2015. This is a needed investment in our future security.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

**Statement of John Fawcett
Legislative Director, RESULTS**

**House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs**

April 4, 2014

The House Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee has led Congress in ensuring our foreign assistance invests in the poorest and most vulnerable, reflecting the best American values of compassion and justice while enhancing our economic and national security. I urge you to continue to support and give particular priority to funding for basic education; maternal and child health; nutrition; tuberculosis; microfinance; and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Basic Education – Global Partnership for Education (GPE): Thanks to leadership of this subcommittee, the U.S. has become a global leader for quality basic education around the world. Despite our progress, there are nearly 57 million primary school aged children not in school, and 250 million primary school aged children are failing to acquire even basic reading, writing and numeracy skills. We now face a critical moment when we must decide how to most effectively program our education aid dollars to achieve the most sustainable and cost-effective results.

The Global Partnership for Education is the only multilateral organization exclusively dedicated to ensuring all children have access to a quality education and are learning. Since 2002, GPE has worked with these donors and partner countries to put an additional 22 million more children into school, trained over 300,000 teachers, and supported the construction of over 52,000 classrooms.

The Global Partnership's unique model brings together donor and 59 developing country governments, the private sector, and civil society to develop and fund strong national education plans. By focusing on building whole education systems and not just the separate elements that make them up, the Global Partnership takes a long-term approach to educational development that fosters country ownership and donor coordination. Investments in the Global Partnership leverage funding from other donors and developing countries. Between 2000 and 2011, domestic financing for education grew by 15 percent in GPE developing countries and only 6 percent in non-GPE countries.

The Global Partnership provides 61 percent of its assistance to fragile and conflict-affected states, a higher proportion than any other major donor. Thanks to the Global Partnership's model, countries like Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are now implementing their first-ever national education plans. In Afghanistan, after decades of war, a lack of service delivery mechanisms, no national curriculum, a large illiterate population, and millions of children out of school, the Global Partnership is helping rebuild Afghanistan through its Interim Education Plan, bringing stakeholders together to establish a coordinated approach to delivering education services.

Through its pledging conference this summer, the Global Partnership for Education aims to raise \$3.5 billion to support education for 29 million of the poorest and most vulnerable children in primary and secondary school. In doing so, the Global Partnership will increase the number of children completing primary school with literacy and numeracy skills by 25 percent in 66 developing country partners by 2018. The Global Partnership is also revising its funding model to maximize the efficient and effective use of its resources towards achieving its mission, more strongly link its strategic goals and objectives to implementation and data-based outcomes, and incentivize and reward the delivery of results.

The United States made its first-ever pledge to the GPE of \$20 million in fiscal year 2012 – a significant first step for the U.S. However, this represents only 2.5 percent of the U.S.’s basic education program in 2012. *A U.S. contribution of \$125 million to the Global Partnership for Education in FY2015 would have a powerful impact on the lives of children worldwide, leverage commitments from other donors to GPE in a pledging year, and demonstrate our government’s commitment to improving education for all.*

Global Health – Maternal and Child Health: Since the June 2012, Child Survival Call to Action co-hosted by the U.S. with UNICEF and the governments of Ethiopia and India, 174 countries endorsed a simple yet audacious goal: ending preventable child deaths by 2035.

Since the U.S. instituted the Maternal and Child Health Account to focus funding on preventing child deaths in developing countries, the world has made enormous strides in saving children’s lives. UNICEF has reported that in the past two decades alone child deaths have been basically halved, plummeting from over 12 million children dying a year in 1990 to 6.6 million in 2012.

While innovation and targeted health interventions have improved global child survival rates, of the nearly seven million children still dying annually, the vast majority are in poor countries; half are in sub-Saharan Africa alone. Most of these deaths are caused by conditions that are simple to treat and prevent such as pneumonia, prematurity, malnutrition, diarrhea, malaria, or from complications during labor and delivery. UNICEF reported that without increased attention, the world will not meet its child survival goal (MDG 4) until 2028 — 13 years after the deadline — and 35 million children will die between 2015 and 2028 who would otherwise have lived had we met the goal on time.

In order to ramp up the U.S. efforts to achieve this goal, the U.S. should increase its support for the Maternal and Child Health account to \$800 million for FY2015.

Global Health – GAVI Alliance: Since 2000, the GAVI Alliance has saved 6 million lives from vaccine preventable deaths. GAVI is a public-private partnership dedicated to protecting children from vaccine-preventable diseases. GAVI support enables developing countries access to new and underutilized vaccines at reduced cost and supports the introduction and scale up of these vaccines into routine immunization systems

Globally one in five children are still unimmunized and most of these children live in remote and hard to reach places. Recognizing the critical role of fully immunizing a child in ending preventable child deaths, leaders from around the world will gather at the end of this year to commit resources to the GAVI Alliance to enable poor countries to scale up access to life-saving vaccines.

Strong U.S. support for GAVI this fiscal year will send a signal of confidence to other donors, which will build global momentum and leverage resources for ending preventable child deaths. ***To support these efforts, the U.S. should \$200 million to the GAVI Alliance in FY2015 to provide vaccines to children.***

Global Health – Nutrition: With U.S. leadership, great strides have been made in reducing child mortality, but 45 percent of preventable child deaths are attributed to undernutrition. Child malnutrition is a condition that results in 3.1 million preventable child deaths annually and chronic undernutrition often causes irreversible physical and mental stunting in 165 million children annually. Malnutrition and stunting diminishes a child's future earning potential and drains billions of dollars in lost productivity and health care costs from poor countries.

Ten interventions were outlined in a 2013 Lancet report that target the most critical time in a child's development, the thousand-day window from pregnancy to a child's second birthday. Scaling up nutrition including the promotion of breast-feeding, access to vitamins and micronutrients for pregnant women and young children, prevention and treatment of severe acute malnutrition, and access to nutritious rich foods improves birth weights, increases brain development, and has long-term health and economic benefits.

In June of 2013 at the Nutrition for Growth Summit, the U.S. pledged to reduce stunting by 20 percent in Feed the Future focus countries. A forthcoming U.S. strategy on nutrition will further enhance the impact and coordination of these programs. ***An allocation of \$200 million for Nutrition in Global Health would support our goal of reducing stunting, leverage our investments in child survival programs, setting the foundation for improved health and gains in economic development.***

Global Health – Tuberculosis: Although usually treatable with a course of inexpensive drugs (\$22–50), tuberculosis kills 1.3 million people every year. TB is the leading curable infectious killer in the world. In 2012, there were 8.6 million new TB cases; 13 percent of those were among people with HIV. However, one in five HIV deaths is attributed to TB.

As the leading killer of people living with HIV/AIDS, TB is undermining the United States' substantial investment through PEPFAR. Without treatment, the vast majority of people with HIV and TB will die within a few months. TB control must also be strengthened as part of a comprehensive approach to women's health. TB is the third leading cause of illness and death of adult women worldwide, and women who develop the disease are more likely to die from it than men. A recent study shows one million children world-wide under 15 years old contract tuberculosis every year, twice as many as previously thought.

A new rapid diagnostic technology called Xpert, developed by an American company, has the potential to revolutionize the fight against TB. Xpert can detect whether TB is a drug-resistant strain so the patient is not given ineffective drugs, and it dramatically reduces the time it takes to obtain an accurate diagnosis from days or even weeks or month to just two hours.

U.S. support for global TB programs has already had a substantial impact; an estimated 22 million people are alive today as direct result of TB programs. *An allocation of \$400 million for bilateral TB programs in 2014 would bolster progress to date, scale up innovative approaches that reach more people, and invest in research for even better TB diagnostics, vaccines, and medications.*

Global Health – Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria: At the 2013 Global Fund pledging conference, the U.S. committed to contribute \$1 to the Global Fund for every \$2 contributed by other donors, up to \$5 billion over the next three years. This historic commitment can leverage \$10 billion in other donor support, enabling the Global Fund to reach its three-year, \$15 billion target and save millions of lives. Through this matching challenge, what the U.S. does right now will prove central to the world's success against the diseases of poverty over the next three years.

Investments through the Global Fund save over a million lives a year from AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. Since its inception in 2002, the Global Fund has supported 6.1 million people receiving antiretroviral treatment, has detected and treated 11.2 million new cases of infectious tuberculosis, and distributed 360 million insecticide-treated nets to protect families from the transmission of malaria in over 150 countries around the world. With U.S. support the Global Fund is poised to defeat these deadly diseases.

An allocation of up to \$1.65 billion, subject to matching contributions, for FY2015 would support the U.S. commitment to creating an AIDS-free generation and leverage investments in these life-saving programs from other donor resources so that these programs can be sustained and expanded.

Microenterprise: An estimated 2.5 billion people have no access to formal financial services, which are both safer and less expensive than informal alternatives. In sub-Saharan Africa, the region with the highest percentage of people living in extreme poverty, three in four adults do not have an account at any formal financial institution – an estimated 400 million Africans.

Despite promising models to extend microfinance to even the most destitute among the poor, USAID has failed to comply with the legislative mandate in the Microfinance Results and Accountability Act of 2004 (PL 108-484) requiring that half of its assistance is directed to the very poor. In 2012, for the first time, USAID reported that the percentage of funds benefiting the very poor was 56 percent – exceeding the target set by the 2004 law. In the same report, the agency recognized that the low percentage of reporting entities rendered this estimate nearly meaningless. In addition to low measurement levels, USAID has yet to produce a strategy to reach this target, as directed by FY2010 Foreign Operations bill report language. The

Subcommittee should urge USAID to comply with this legislative mandate by including the following language in its report:

***Microenterprise:** As required by section 251(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, USAID is to target half of all microfinance and microenterprise funds to the very poor, defined as those living on less than \$1.25 a day. The Committee is concerned about the very low uptake of poverty measurement tools, which has resulted in insufficient evidence showing USAID's fulfillment of the legal target to reach the very poor. The Committee recommends that USAID work with partner organizations to increase uptake of poverty measurement tools developed and/or approved by USAID.*

Because the delivery of financial services is an especially important tool in enabling the poor to escape from poverty, the Committee encourages investment in a variety of financial services that allows the poor to save, borrow, and access insurance, remittances, and other key services. The Committee directs increased investment in microfinance in sub-Saharan Africa within the USAID microfinance and microenterprise program to reach the poorest and most marginalized.

Chairwoman Granger, members of the Subcommittee: Rotary International appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony in support of continuation of funding for Fiscal Year 2015 for the Polio Eradication Initiative of the U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) is an unprecedented model of cooperation among national governments, civil society and UN agencies to work together to reach the most vulnerable through a safe, cost-effective public health intervention, and one which is increasingly being combined with opportunistic, complementary interventions such as the distribution of life-saving vitamin A drops, oral rehydration therapy, zinc supplements, and even something as simple as the distribution of soap. The goal of a polio free world is within our grasp because polio eradication strategies work even in the most challenging environments and circumstances, as demonstrated by India, the most recent of the more than 200 countries that have successfully interrupted transmission of polio. Rotary International encourages sustained funding for USAID's Polio Eradication Initiative at \$59 million, the level provided in Fiscal Year 14. Such support would enable USAID to continue its critical role in implementing the polio eradication strategies and innovations outlined in the *Polio Eradication and Endgame Strategic Plan (2013-2018)*.

PROGRESS IN THE GLOBAL PROGRAM TO ERADICATE POLIO

Significant strides were made in 2013 toward stopping transmission of polio. Thanks to this committee's leadership in appropriating funds supporting the Polio Eradication Activities of USAID:

- India, once the source of more cases of polio than all other countries combined, was certified free from polio in February 2014, following three years without a case of polio.
- As of 27 March 2014, eleven countries in South East Asia, (India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar, Bhutan, Thailand, Timor Leste, North Korea, Maldives and Sri Lanka) have been certified polio-free.
- Eradication efforts have led to more than a 99% decrease in cases since the launch of the GPEI in 1988.
- The number of polio cases in the endemic countries was 40% lower in 2013 than in 2012 (160 vs. 217). Afghanistan and Nigeria each had less than half the number of cases in 2013 that they had in 2012.
- In Afghanistan, no indigenous cases of wild poliovirus were reported in 2013 - all cases were linked to cross-border transmission with neighboring Pakistan. Four polio cases have been reported in Afghanistan in 2014.
- Pakistan is now considered to be the only country in the world with uncontrolled transmission of wild polio and as of 20 March, accounts for more than 75% of polio cases in 2014.
- Outbreaks in the Horn of Africa and Syria accounted for roughly 60% of all cases in 2013. These outbreaks underscore the risk to polio-free countries until the wild poliovirus has been eradicated in the remaining places where it persists.
- Incidence of type 3 polio is at historically low levels. There have been no cases of type 3 polio since November 2012.
- Lack of access to children in insecure areas continues to hamper progress. In Pakistan alone, more than 50 health workers and security personnel assigned to protect them have been killed in targeted attacks since November of 2012. Insecurity/inability to access large populations is

now a key factor in all endemic transmission zones and is also a factor in outbreak areas (Syria, Horn of Africa).

- A shortfall in the funding needed for polio eradication activities in polio affected and at-risk countries continues to pose a serious threat to the achievement of a polio free world.

THE ROLE OF ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

Rotary International, a global association of more than 34,000 Rotary clubs in more than 170 countries with a membership of over 1.2 million business and professional leaders (more than 345,000 of which are in the U.S.), has been committed to battling polio since 1985. Rotary International has contributed more than US\$1.2 billion toward a polio free world – representing the largest contribution by an international service organization to a public health initiative ever. Rotary also leads the United States Coalition for the Eradication of Polio, a group of committed child health advocates that includes the March of Dimes Foundation, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Task Force for Global Health, the United Nations Foundation, and the U.S. Fund for UNICEF. These organizations join us in thanking you for your support of the GPEI.

ROLE OF THE U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID)

In April of 1996, with the support of this Subcommittee, USAID launched its own Polio Eradication Initiative to coordinate agency-wide efforts to help eradicate polio. Congress has continued its commitment to polio eradication since that time. The following are highlights of USAID's 2013 polio eradication activities.

- The certification of Southeast Asia as polio free: USAID's substantial financial and technical contributions in the four largest countries in the region (India, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Nepal) contributed significantly to the certification of the Southeast Asia Region as polio free.
- Endemic countries: In the endemic countries (Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria), USAID focuses on improving quality of immunization campaigns through better planning and feedback, identifying reasons for missed children through independent monitoring and post-campaign surveys, and tracking the virus through enhanced disease surveillance by communities themselves and through health facilities. USAID also supports the promotion of polio eradication campaigns through mass media, print and interpersonal communication. The messages are adapted to local conditions after each round based on community feedback. Sustaining public trust in immunization is of paramount importance.
- Maintaining focus in polio-free/at risk countries: USAID has promoted the need to sustain high population immunity and surveillance and reduce the threat of re-emergence by reducing the number of accumulated susceptible children. Unfortunately, polio outbreaks in the Horn of Africa, Cameroon and Syria have highlighted the challenges of sustaining the gains in polio-free areas, especially in insecure, conflict and disaster areas. USAID focuses on outbreak response, cross-border coordination, and identification of marginalized populations such as migrants, nomads and refugees. USAID provided approximately \$5 million of FY 13 funds for the Horn of Africa to prevent the Somalia outbreak from spreading, through WHO, UNICEF and CORE Group NGO Polio Project.

- Technical areas of emphasis: The majority of USAID funds are for polio surveillance, through Ministry of Health-WHO's facility-based reporting system, and, through the NGOs community-based case detection approach. Both approaches work to rapidly identify cases of Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP), the signal condition for polio. Timely identification of cases triggers a rapid response thereby slowing outbreaks or pointing out areas of low immunization coverage. This information is vital for identifying existing and emerging gaps in population immunity. Surveillance also helps document the absence of disease – the key indicator of success. This has been especially important in the 23 countries USAID supports in Africa, South Asia and the Near East. The USAID-funded surveillance system detected the first case in Somalia which led to an outbreak response within 5 days, thus minimizing the outbreak and putting neighboring countries on high alert. USAID partnered with CDC to improve polio eradication and routine immunization in Nigeria and West/Central Africa, especially among nomadic and mobile populations. Communications is another area where USAID provides significant resources. Understanding why parents refuse vaccination, hide kids from vaccination or switch from accepting to refusing immunization is at the heart of USAID's mobilization efforts. Developing persuasive messages, provided through reputable channels, and respectfully addressing parental concerns has been key to building trust.
- Addressing complex challenges: Although limited in what it can do in security challenged environments such as Afghanistan and Pakistan, USAID continues to focus on disease surveillance and community mobilization, but with a very low profile. In both countries, USAID is the largest funder of the polio surveillance systems, which are functioning at international standards. In Pakistan, USAID also supports UNICEF's work in community mobilization which continues to reduce refusals due to mis-information and mistrust. Despite these efforts, there are pockets of hard core resistance and the violence continues. In Afghanistan, USAID has been the lead agency in negotiating 'deconflicting' arrangements with NATO/ISAF, coalition forces and Afghan National Security Forces.

In areas of Nigeria affected by conflict, while cases are low in traditionally high transmission areas, on-going violence in Borno, Yobe and other northern states contribute to low immunization coverage and on-going polio transmission. In response, USAID is initiating a low profile/low visibility expansion of the CORE Group NGO Polio Project into these areas. USAID/Nigeria has also added non-polio funds to allow for a more desired package of services to be offered in the conflict areas. Provision of a broader range of vaccinations and health interventions responds to a number of community-stated needs and makes risking a trip to a health center more likely; health workers are more likely to carry on their work if they are risking attacks for a package of services and not just one vaccine. The governments of all three remaining endemic countries need to own the eradication efforts and be seen as leading the program, address the felt needs of their constituents and reduce violence against health workers.

- Sustaining Gains and Preventing Deterioration: The following USAID-supported polio countries were able to sustain polio-free status in 2013: Bangladesh, Benin, Ghana, Indonesia, Liberia, Nepal, South Sudan, Uganda and Yemen. Mali, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, and DRC saw few cases with no large scale outbreaks, indicating successful outbreak response in 2012 continued into 2013. These countries received support through WHO for surveillance, which is well functioning and detecting the cases. Support for polio surveillance is needed in every

country until global certification is achieved. USAID funds, prepositioned for outbreak response have helped limit outbreaks in the Horn of Africa. Most of the polio surveillance systems that have been functioning with high quality for a number of years are now sustaining their achievements while expanding to include surveillance for measles, rubella and other vaccine preventable diseases - exactly the investment strategy USAID was striving for. In Ethiopia, and increasingly along all the borders in the Horn, through the CORE Group of NGOs, community-based surveillance and cross-border coordination are having a big impact in searching for cases and improving immunization quality in nomadic populations moving across the Horn of Africa.

- Preventing outbreaks and improving outbreak preparedness response: USAID continues to maintain vigilant focus on effective outbreak response via advocating increased SIAs and surveillance in these countries namely Syria, Lebanon, and now Iraq. USAID also continues to support outbreak prevention and greater preparedness in the remaining vulnerable countries for example through its facilitation of a joint WHO/UNICEF Polio Outbreak Prevention Action Plan in Ukraine and the planning of a Polio Outbreak Simulation Exercise (POSE) in Djibouti.
- Strategic technical assistance and expertise: USAID staff continue to be deeply involved in the polio eradication efforts through national Inter-Agency Coordinating Committees, Technical Advisory Groups, through direct observation of immunization campaigns, and in policy dialogue with host-countries, partners, key stakeholders and other donors.

FISCAL YEAR 2015 BUDGET REQUEST

For Fiscal Year 2015, we respectfully request this subcommittee to provide \$59 million for the polio eradication activities of USAID, the same level that was provided in Fiscal Year 2014.

BENEFITS OF POLIO ERADICATION

Since 1988, over 10 million people who would otherwise have been paralyzed are walking because they have been immunized against polio. Tens of thousands of public health workers have been trained to manage massive immunization programs and investigate cases of acute flaccid paralysis. Cold chain, transport and communications systems for immunization have been strengthened. The global network of 145 laboratories and trained personnel established by the GPEI also tracks measles, rubella, yellow fever, meningitis, and other deadly infectious diseases and will do so long after polio is eradicated.

A study published in the November 2010 issue of the journal *Vaccine* estimates that the GPEI could provide net benefits of at least \$40-50 billion. Polio eradication is a cost-effective public health investment with permanent benefits. On the other hand, as many as 200,000 children could be paralyzed annually in the next 10 years if the world fails to capitalize on the more than \$10 billion already invested in eradication. Success will ensure that the significant investment made by the US, Rotary International, and many other countries and entities, is protected in perpetuity.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

**Dr. Peter Hotez
President
Sabin Vaccine Institute**

**Before the
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
April 3, 2014**

Chairwoman Granger, Ranking Member Lowey, and Members of the Subcommittee, it is my pleasure on behalf of the Sabin Vaccine Institute (Sabin) and its leading initiative, The Global Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases, to submit this written testimony to the Subcommittee to discuss the fiscal year (FY) 2015 budget request and the important global health issue of neglected tropical diseases (NTDs). First and foremost, we thank the Subcommittee for your steadfast commitment to global health and ask as you consider future investments in our nation's foreign assistance programs to show strong support for the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD) Program by increasing the FY 2015 allocation for the NTD Program to \$125 million, an increase of \$25 million over FY 2014 spending levels.

As you know, NTDs impact over a billion people across Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean, including more than 500 million children. These diseases cause blindness, crippling disability, malnutrition, stunted growth, delayed cognitive development, and increase the likelihood of contracting HIV. New disease burden estimates indicate that NTDs are among the leading global health problems across the developing world thwarting opportunities for social progress and economic growth. Seven of the most common NTDs are ascariasis (roundworm), trichuriasis (whipworm), hookworm, schistosomiasis (snail fever), lymphatic filariasis (elephantiasis), trachoma, and onchocerciasis (river blindness).

NTDs have devastating consequences for maternal and child health, access to education, and general health and nutrition, and yet continue to be recognized as a "best buy" in public health costing as little as 50 cents per person per year. Thanks to the generous drug donations from leading pharmaceutical companies, like Merck & Co. Inc., GlaxoSmithKline, Johnson & Johnson, and Pfizer, and the efforts of USAID's innovative NTD Program, a unique public/private partnership has been formed to efficiently and cost effectively address NTD control and elimination. Since FY 2006, the NTD Program has improved the lives of over 251 million people, delivered over 587 million NTD treatments, and trained over 500,000 community workers. It has exceeded expectations in its ability to deliver treatments for the seven most common NTDs, has leveraged more than \$6.7 billion worth of donated medicines, and operates in 25 countries including, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone.

Additionally, new information has found an important link between a form of schistosomiasis (one of the diseases being targeted by the medicines) known as female genital schistosomiasis (FGS) and HIV/AIDS. FGS is now considered one of the most common gynecologic conditions in Sub-Saharan Africa, affecting as many as 100 million girls and women. It has been linked to a 3-4 fold increase in a woman's risk of acquiring HIV/AIDS so that FGS may represent one of Africa's most important co-factors in its AIDS epidemic, yet one that could be tackled through the current package of NTD medicines.

The leadership of the United States and the generosity of the American people continue to spearhead the fight against NTDs. The second anniversary of 2012 London Declaration on NTDs (London Declaration) was just recognized on April 2nd in which the United States, the United Kingdom, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 13 pharmaceutical companies, along with other NTD partners joined together to endorse bold targets for control, elimination, or eradication of 10 NTDs by 2020.

Over the past two years, solid progress has been made in reaching the goals of the London Declaration with 1.35 billion treatments supplied by pharmaceutical partners in 2013 alone, more than 70 endemic countries developing multi-year integrated NTD control plans (nearly a 50% increase since 2012), and NTD partners are now using a comprehensive London Declaration Scorecard to promote accountability, transparency, and evidence-based prioritization. However, significant funding gaps to implement comprehensive NTD control and elimination programs remain and without continued support by existing partners, as well as redoubled efforts to attract new partners, scale up implementation, and increase resources, we will not achieve the 2020 NTD goals. That is why funding for USAID's NTD Program must increase and, the inclusion of NTD control measures within other USAID programs or among broader U.S. government programming should also be considered. Opportunities for cross-sectoral coordination may include maternal and child health services delivery platforms (e.g., childhood immunizations, vitamin supplements), water and sanitation programs, as well as food security and nutrition initiatives. Greater investment in NTD-related research and development is also needed to support the introduction of new technologies (e.g., drugs, vaccines and diagnostics) to ensure the achievement of the goals of disease control and elimination, and address the urgent needs of particularly neglected patient populations, including those suffering from NTDs with the highest death rates. At the Sabin Vaccine Institute we are developing new generation vaccines for several key NTDs including hookworm infection (to prevent post-treatment reinfection), schistosomiasis (as a possible AIDS prevention strategy), Chagas disease, and leishmaniasis. Our Chagas disease efforts are especially relevant to the health of people here in the U.S. as an estimated 300,000 Americans currently live with Chagas disease, with Texas the most affected state. Chagas disease is now a leading yet neglected cause of heart disease in Texas and neighboring states.

We applaud the United States government's on-going commitment and vital dedication to this fight, which has been instrumental in inspiring similar efforts by partner countries to initiate control programs and allocate funding. It is important to note that, if funding for USAID's NTD Program does not expand in FY 2015, the capacity to effectively monitor and evaluate existing programs, and scale-up delivery of the increased drug donations to those who need them most

will be significantly reduced and we may see a resurgence of many of these NTDs in the future. Furthermore, the momentum generated over the past few years could well stall if the United States steps back from its global leadership role in NTD control and elimination efforts. We urge you, therefore, to vigorously support this public/private partnership that will benefit not only the developing world, but will ultimately benefit the economic prosperity and national security of the United States by helping to lift millions across the globe out of a vicious cycle of poverty and disease.

Again, we thank the Subcommittee for your outstanding leadership on this issue and the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding USAID's NTD Program and the FY 2015 budget.

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**Testimony for the House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs**

**Kristin Lord
Acting President, United States Institute of Peace**

Submitted on April 4, 2014

Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member Lowey, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of the budget request for the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) for fiscal year 2015.

USIP requests \$35,300,000 in FY 2015 to advance the Institute's mission of preventing, mitigating and resolving violent conflicts around the world by engaging directly in conflict zones and providing analysis, education and resources to those working for peace. This request reflects the funding level requested by the Administration and represents a 5 percent reduction from the FY 2014 enacted level. The Institute will absorb this funding decrease by reducing the scope of existing programs and foregoing opportunities to prevent or reduce violent conflict.

The Institute was created by the Congress nearly 30 years ago to perform a unique and vital role in advancing our nation's strategic interests and protecting the vulnerable from conflicts that devastate lives and livelihoods. The Institute's goal is to prevent conflict and, in so doing, to avoid the need for American military intervention. When our nation does use force – as it did in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya – the goal is to sustain the gains made by our armed forces, often at considerable sacrifice. USIP began working in Iraq, where violence is deeply intertwined with the devastating civil war in Syria, in 2003 and is still working there today. USIP began working in Afghanistan in 2004 and the Institute intends to sustain a presence as long as necessary and as the security environment permits.

USIP operates with a “light footprint,” empowering others to prevent and mitigate violent conflict. This approach is both effective and cost-effective. At an annual cost equivalent to fielding one light rifle infantry platoon in Afghanistan, this approach enables USIP to prevent the loss of American lives and preserve U.S. tax dollars, while relieving human suffering and enhancing American security. It makes USIP a force multiplier, maximizing other U.S. government investments in diplomacy, foreign assistance and the armed forces. It also strengthens local institutions around the world that can sustain long-term campaigns against deadly violence for decades after America’s investment ends.

USIP collaborates with partners from across the U.S. government, bringing together civilian and military leaders as well as leaders from nongovernmental organizations in the United States and around the world. USIP does this on the ground in conflict zones, and also through education, training, and convening here at home. By conducting critical research on conflict dynamics and analyzing best practices, the Institute helps its U.S. government partners to be even more effective. By developing cutting-edge methods to evaluate impact, USIP ensures that both its own work, and the work of others, is designed for maximum success.

I welcome this opportunity to share a few recent examples of USIP’s work to prevent, mitigate and resolve violent conflict around the world:

- The presidential election on April 5 will be a critical determinant of Afghanistan’s future peace and stability. USIP has been working actively there, in partnership with Afghan civil society, to prevent election violence and conduct public education campaigns that spread the message that participating peacefully in the presidential and 2015 parliamentary elections is essential to the country’s future. To encourage Afghan women to participate in the election, USIP supported an Afghan NGO, Equality for Peace and

Democracy, which brought together women from all of Afghanistan's 34 provinces to understand the range of women's expectations from the presidential candidates. The group then organized a forum for women in which all 11 presidential candidates appeared personally or sent a vice presidential candidate to present their platforms and answer questions.

- USIP is working in countries of strategic importance to U.S. national security in the Middle East and North Africa that are struggling with spiraling levels of violence. USIP is assisting these countries create the political and legal institutions that would allow them to manage conflict without resort to arms. In Libya, USIP is analyzing the dangerous rising links between organized crime and militia groups, working to support reform of prisons that are dangerous breeding grounds for extremists, and supporting dialogues that will enable legitimate security forces, rather than extremist militias, to provide citizen security. In Tunisia, the Institute will work with police to facilitate their transformation from a feared arm of the authoritarian regime to a modern police service that can defend the nation against extremist violence. USIP is working with Syrian opposition groups to strengthen the rule of law in rebel-controlled territory and to digitize property records, at risk of destruction by Islamist groups, to stem disputes over land. USIP teams are also working with Syrian religious leaders to help them mitigate violent conflict in their own communities.
- USIP is working to counter violent extremism around the world. In Nigeria, USIP is working with networks of mothers and other community leaders to prevent radicalization by terrorist groups such as Boko Haram. USIP recently convened an unprecedented gathering of 13 of northern Nigeria's 19 state governors in Washington to discuss the

security, economic and social challenges that fuel extremist groups. In Pakistan, USIP has developed and implemented peace education curricula for religious schools and co-sponsored teacher training. USIP also supports grassroots Pakistani efforts to take back public space from extremist messaging.

- USIP works with international organizations and local women's groups worldwide to develop training and standards that reduce abuse by armed groups, civilians and/or the military, and that help prevent sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict environments. In addition to funding cutting-edge research for the last 15 years on sexual violence, the Institute is training practitioners in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East to address this serious security and humanitarian problem.
- USIP engages in highly targeted conflict management activities in Asia. In Burma, USIP is enhancing the ability of police to manage communal violence in ways that respect the rule of law and human rights. For example, the Institute is facilitating dialogues to increase communication and coordination among government officials, police, civil society organizations, media figures and ethnic and religious leaders, to help them manage conflict without violence. USIP is also supporting dialogue between Buddhist and Muslim groups to stem growing violence in the country's north. Preventing crises involving China, Taiwan, Japan and the Koreas is a crucial U.S. national security priority. USIP continues to provide a forum for senior policymakers from the region to come together with American counterparts to discuss how to avoid maritime incidents and other potential flashpoints, and keep them from escalating.
- In order to foster a stable and lasting peace in Colombia after decades of conflict, USIP is supporting efforts of local civic organizations and peace and human rights groups to

strengthen their conflict prevention and resolution capabilities. For example, USIP is training a network of ecumenical women peacemakers in mediation and dialogue, empowering them to support the hard work of peace in their own communities.

These examples – and many like them – exemplify the low-cost, high-impact activities that define USIP's approach.

Budgets are a reflection of values and priorities. The Subcommittee's budget reflects America's commitment to peace and security around the world and the priority of advancing U.S. strategic interests. It enables USIP's work to reduce violence in countries critical to U.S. interests and helps to avoid the staggering costs of war, both human and financial. The Subcommittee's support enables the Institute to create positive change around the globe, helping others to reduce violence, and symbolizing America's commitment to peace.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to submit this testimony and for your leadership of the Subcommittee. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions. It would be an honor to tell you more about USIP, and how the Institute serves the nation.

**STATEMENT OF CARYL M. STERN
PRESIDENT AND CEO, UNITED STATES FUND FOR UNICEF**

**BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND
RELATED PROGRAMS
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

MARCH 28, 2014

Madam Chairwoman and members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of nearly one million American supporters of the United States Fund for UNICEF, I appreciate this opportunity to submit testimony regarding the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). I respectfully ask the Subcommittee to provide at least \$132 million as the U.S. Government's voluntary contribution to UNICEF under the International Organizations and Programs Account for Fiscal Year 2015. This maintains the contribution of \$132 million to UNICEF provided by the U.S. Congress in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014.

I commend the bipartisan leadership this Subcommittee has taken to champion programs that help children around the world.

Since its creation in 1946, UNICEF has saved more children's lives than any humanitarian organization in the world. UNICEF staff work on the ground in developing and transitional countries and territories to help children survive and thrive, from early childhood through adolescence. UNICEF supports prenatal care, child health and nutrition, clean water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and protecting children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS.

All of UNICEF's funding comes from voluntary contributions from governments, businesses, foundations, and individuals. In fact, 40 percent of UNICEF's total funding comes from non-government sources.

As an organization completely funded by voluntary contributions, UNICEF makes sure that its operations are efficient and focused on results where they matter – for vulnerable children around the world. More than 90 per cent of UNICEF's funds support program activities.

Thanks to strong support from the U.S. Congress for UNICEF and for child survival, the number of children dying before age five has dropped by more than half since 1960, from an estimated 20 million deaths to 6.6 million in 2013. Almost one-third of the 50 least-developed countries have reduced child mortality rates by 40 percent or more since 1990 – proof that progress for children is possible even in poor countries.

We believe that it is possible to end preventable child deaths globally in a generation, with continued investment in cost-effective, coordinated interventions for children and mothers. UNICEF's efforts around the world implement the compassion of the American people by helping children and families. That is why UNICEF enjoys incredible backing from Americans for its mission of child survival and development, from children participating in "Trick or Treat for UNICEF," to major corporations donating money and products. That private support is

critical to UNICEF's success in saving children's lives from measles and cholera, providing access to clean water, helping children stay in school, and thwarting child traffickers trying to exploit vulnerable children.

The U.S. Fund for UNICEF is also proud of its partnerships with the private sector to save children's lives. Among many examples, the Caterpillar Foundation is funding education and health projects through UNICEF in three African countries; American Airlines employee volunteers are collecting donations to UNICEF of foreign currency from customers on selected international flights; and UPS made a multi-year commitment to provide shipping services and improve UNICEF's supply chain and logistics systems.

The U.S. Government's longstanding and generous support of UNICEF allows it to leverage private sector funding and work with U.S. Government programs to make a real difference in saving children's lives.

For more than 50 years, UNICEF has been a world leader in immunizations, and is the world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries. In 2012, UNICEF procured 1.9 billion doses of vaccines for 96 countries, as well as auto-disable syringes to ensure those vaccines can be delivered safely.

UNICEF procures vaccines for the GAVI Alliance; and also buys all vaccines and related items for global campaigns not covered by GAVI, including polio eradication, elimination of neonatal and maternal tetanus, and measles control. In addition, UNICEF works in-country to ensure that vaccines reach even the poorest children and communities.

Malaria remains a major threat to children. UNICEF is one of the largest buyers of mosquito nets in the world, delivering more than 18.5 million bed nets to 39 countries in 2012.

About 150 million children under five – one in four – are malnourished, and malnutrition contributes to up to half of all child deaths. We know that therapeutic foods can help to bring a child back from the verge of starvation. In 2012, UNICEF provided 29,000 tons of ready-to-eat therapeutic foods (RUTF), and 271 million sachets of micronutrient powder to help supplement children's diets.

In 2011, UNICEF's Supply Division improved transparency around the prices it pays for strategic essential supplies, including vaccines, RUTF, and bed nets. The publishing of prices supports governments and partners in making more informed decisions about procurement.

Kiwanis International and thousands of Americans partner with UNICEF for The Eliminate Project, the current Kiwanis global campaign to eliminate maternal and neonatal tetanus (MNT). One newborn dies every nine minutes from tetanus. Our collaboration with Kiwanis is a global campaign to save the lives of mothers and babies by eliminating MNT.

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative, a partnership led by UNICEF, Rotary International, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, and others, has helped reduce polio cases by more than 99 percent since 1988. This is incredible progress and the end of polio is within reach – but we can't stop now. UNICEF and its partners continue to support massive immunization campaigns to eradicate once and for all this terrible disease.

Education is a critical need for children's futures, especially for girls: education helps protect girls from exploitation, child marriage, and abuse. UNICEF works with countries to identify the

57 million children out of school, why they are out of school, and what strategies will help these children get into school. For example, in Guinea, where only 34 percent of girls in rural communities complete their primary education, UNICEF established local associations of mothers of girl students, that reach out to both girls and their parents to improve girls' access to learning and to ensure that they stay in school until they complete their primary education. In emergencies, UNICEF strives to ensure access to education; in 2012, UNICEF supplied 93,000 classroom kits, 15,000 recreation kits, and 15,000 Early Childhood Development Kits in response to crisis situations.

UNICEF's established presence in developing countries makes it a critical partner for the U.S. Government in responses to major crises. In 2012, UNICEF responded to 286 emergencies in 79 countries. UNICEF's Supply Division procured \$2.5 billion worth of supplies and services for children and women around the world.

For example, UNICEF provides health, nutrition, water/sanitation, and child protection interventions for hundreds of thousands of children affected by the three years of violence in Syria, both within Syria and for refugees in surrounding countries. For UNICEF, saving the lives of those children is not enough; UNICEF wants to protect their futures as well. UNICEF is working to ensure that the children of Syria have safe education; protection from exploitation, abuse, and violence; psychological care and support; and opportunities for social cohesion and stability in a volatile region.

UNICEF's ability to partner with the U.S. Government, and with important nonprofit partners like Kiwanis, Rotary, the American Red Cross, and the GAVI Alliance, depends on a strong U.S. contribution to UNICEF, as well as maintaining U.S. support for its bilateral child health programs. In this regard, the U.S. Fund for UNICEF supports the funding requested by our partners for Iodine Deficiency Disorders, Polio Eradication, and the GAVI Alliance. Because of the importance of U.S. child survival and health programs, our organization also asks the U.S. Congress to provide \$800 million for the Maternal and Child Health Account in Fiscal Year 2014.

Annual government contributions to UNICEF's regular resources budget constitute the single most important funding source UNICEF worldwide. The U.S. Government's voluntary contribution to UNICEF's regular resources provides the foundation for UNICEF's work to save children's lives and improve their futures. Resources provided by this Subcommittee are critical to UNICEF's ability to help the United States in international humanitarian crises, conflict areas, and emerging threats to the well-being of children.

Madam Chairwoman, this Subcommittee has long been a champion for the well-being of the world's children, ensuring that children are a priority of U.S. foreign assistance funding. American advocates of UNICEF's work for the world's children salute the bipartisan support this Subcommittee has provided for child survival and for UNICEF.

We believe that UNICEF is an indispensable partner of the United States on initiatives to save lives and protect vulnerable children around the world.

We cannot rest on our past successes. Unfortunately, 6.6 million children under five still die every year, mostly from preventable causes. Put another way, a child is dying every five seconds. We believe that number should be zero.

A strong commitment from the United States will strengthen UNICEF's capacity to meet the needs of vulnerable children, in partnership with Americans who care about children everywhere.

I respectfully ask the Subcommittee to provide \$132 million under the International Organizations and Program Account for UNICEF's regular resources for Fiscal Year 2015.



Outside Witness Testimony for FY2015
Written Statement for the Record

by Adil Baguirov, Ph.D.
Managing Director and co-founder, U.S. Azeris Network (USAN)
Washington, D.C.

Before the United States House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

April 2, 2014

Madam Chairwoman, honorable Ranking Member, honorable members of the Subcommittee,

To summarize U.S. Azeris Network (USAN)'s request in FY2015 aid to Armenia and Azerbaijan (including the Armenia-occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan):

Aid	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Armenia-occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan	Other countries
Economic, technical, USAID	Only democracy promotion aid should be earmarked to improve human rights	Per Administration request, or more	Never requested and should always be zero (\$0).	Special aid should also be considered to ethnic Azerbaijanis living in Iran, the Turcomans of Iraq, and the Ahiska (Meskheta) Turks in Russia and Ukraine.
Military	No military aid should be given to Armenia	\$8 million FMF, \$900,000 IMET	Never requested, never allocated, not applicable	N/A

USAN always promotes fair and need-based foreign aid assistance, based on three important criteria:

- 1) allied relationship of the recipient state with the U.S., and,
- 2) the recipient nation must have a demonstrated and certified necessity and need to be able to absorb the aid, and,
- 3) legality of the aid and compliance with U.S. and international laws.

With the current unfortunate events surrounding Ukraine, the status of Crimea region, the crisis in the U.S.-Russia relations, and the blow to the entire system of international law and relations, actions by the U.S. Congress and the U.S. Government in regards to the Armenia-occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, which is the first, biggest and longest-running hotspot in the former Soviet Union, are even more important. Congress cannot ignore the obvious facts – continuing violation of territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan by Armenia allows not just one aggressor government (Armenia) to go free and a victim (Azerbaijan) to suffer, but proliferates more aggressors and victims in the greater region.

Due to the Administration's inattention, and Congress' leadership allowing a handful of pro-Armenia members in both chambers, such as Congressmen Pallone, Schiff, Sherman, and Grimm, to go contrary to the U.S. policy, U.S. national interests and U.S. and international laws, the blatant violation of international and U.S. laws by Armenia, a military outpost of Russia, through its occupation of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, has persisted over the years.

Adding insult to injury, this handful of members were able, for years, to reward the aggressor, Armenian government, with more aid, while reduce aid to the victim, Azerbaijan.

There is a great imbalance in U.S. assistance to Azerbaijan and Armenia. After all, Azerbaijan is almost three times the size and population, and has a several times larger the size of refugee/IDP population. In reality, because Armenia militarily occupies some 16% of Azerbaijan and thus commits action in violation of the territorial integrity or national sovereignty of another Independent State of the former Soviet Union, such as violations included in the Helsinki Final Act, per Section 7070 of the FY2012 Conference Report and other relevant U.S. laws, then probably none of the previously appropriated or funds under consideration shall be made available for assistance to Armenia. Ideally, there should be no aid to Armenia (except for democracy-building and promotion of human rights) and at least as much for Azerbaijan as what the Administration will request, but there certainly is a need for more to help Azerbaijani IDPs, promote far greater education and cultural exchanges.

Also, USAN requests to **not** include **any** direct assistance for the Armenia-occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan in FY2015.

Furthermore, USAN feels that based on prior actuals, real absorption capacity and Pentagon's own assessments (and not the wants of a special interest group), there should be \$900,000 in International Military Education and Training (IMET) aid accompanied by \$8 million in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) for Azerbaijan, while since Armenia's army is occupying parts of Azerbaijan in violation of U.S. and international law, there should not be FMF or IMET aid to Armenian armed forces at all. The so-called "military parity" is not required and meaningless, considering how small the U.S. aid is compared to the overall defense budgets of the two nations, and how different states have different needs, and U.S. national security interests. For example, Armenia spends over \$450 million on arms every year – which is 4.2% of its GDP according to SIPRI's 2010 figures (in comparison, Azerbaijan spends only 2.9% of its GDP on defense, according to SIPRI's 2010 figures). In 2014 the military spending in Armenia will go up by another 6%, according to its government.

According to then U.S. Ambassador to Armenia John Evans, "The Ministry of Defense [of Armenia] also typically benefits from supplemental spending bills throughout the year as well as off-budget expenditures." He continues: "Because there is no effective independent oversight of these expenditures, it is widely suspected that senior Ministry of Defense officials take advantage of these off-budget funds for personal use."

NO DIRECT AID TO NAGORNO KARABAKH SHOULD BE PERMITTED

Direct aid to the Armenia-occupied Nagorno Karabakh region of Azerbaijan obviously **causes irritation and protests on the part of both Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijani-Americans, and spoils the relations between allies significantly. There was never any direct aid requested for Nagorno-Karabakh in either FY2015 or FY2014, or previously, by any of the U.S. Administrations.**

Any direct aid to the Armenia-occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan goes to the military junta, led by the Armed Forces of Armenia, which illegally occupies this Azerbaijani region. This harms the U.S. national interests, its international and regional standing and prestige, and its appearance of an honest, neutral broker in the mediation between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

U.S. is the only country in the world to allocate aid directly to the occupied region, bypassing central authorities in Baku. U.S. does not give any direct aid to similar post-Soviet conflict zones such as Crimea (Ukraine), Abkhazia (Georgia), South Ossetia (Georgia) and Transdnistria (Moldova), not to mention many other similar regions around the world, such as Chechnya in Russia in the 1990s and 2000s, just to name a few - then why should Congress provide any direct aid to the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region?

Aside from this action sending the wrong message symbolically, this aid **frees up funds for the Armenian armed forces to continuing illegal occupation of 16% of Azerbaijan, buying arms, as well as serving as a black hole for narcotics and drug trade, arms smuggling** (there is a 132 km border with Iran), diamond and precious metals trade, etc. Hence, it is absolutely essential that there is no allocation of direct U.S. aid to the occupied Nagorno Karabakh region of Azerbaijan starting this year.

It has been reported, established and certified many times by the U.S. Government (e.g., the State Department - see <http://Karabakh.USAzetis.org> for a detailed fact sheet), that Armenia occupies Azerbaijan and thus violates the latter's territorial integrity and sovereignty, and it is thus ineligible for any U.S. aid.

CONCLUSION

USAN makes the following requests for Azerbaijan and Armenia:

Armenia – follow Administration's request or give less in aid (except for democracy and human rights promotion). At the same time there should be absolutely no military aid (FMF/IMET) to the Armenian government for as long as its policy of ethnic cleansing, aggression and occupation persists.

Azerbaijan – follow Administration's request or provide more; and provide \$8 million for FMF, and \$900,000 IMET aid.

Armenia-occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan – there should be \$0.00 (zero) in direct aid.

Regarding other countries in the greater region, special aid should also be considered to ethnic Azerbaijanis living in Iran, the Turcomans of Iraq, and the Ahiska (Meskheti) Turks in Russia and Ukraine, and the Crimean Tatars.

UNITED MACEDONIAN DIASPORA

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Testimony of Mr. Metodija A. Koloski, the President of United Macedonian Diaspora, as submitted to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs:

April 4, 2014

Congresswoman Granger, Congresswoman Lowey, and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you very much for the opportunity to submit written testimony to your Subcommittee on behalf of the United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD), the voice of our nation's close to half a million Americans of Macedonian heritage.

With the release of President Obama's proposed FY 2015 budget, the Republic of Macedonia is expected to receive \$12,328,000.00 in foreign aid from the United States, a dramatic decrease from \$27.5 million in FY 2011, \$19.5 million in FY 2012, \$16.5 million in FY 2013, and a slight increase from \$11,486,000.00 in FY 2014. Our community is very concerned that the level of funding being offered to Macedonia does not accurately reflect the close relationship between the two allies, especially given the strategic partnership agreement signed in May 2008 urging enhanced political, military, economic, and people-to-people ties.

Since formally recognizing Macedonia's independence in 1994, the United States has spurred tremendous development and growth in the country, providing over \$1 billion in foreign aid. This has helped Macedonia to overcome the economic legacy of a command economy, and the after-effects of Greece's three-year economic embargo, which Macedonia is still feeling the effects of after 15 years.

Of the most important aspects of this aid has been in the educational sector. As a result of past USAID projects, a new teacher certification program has been enacted, which requires in-class experience before being granted certification, thus moving away from attendance-based certification. USAID provided over 6,000 computers to all primary and secondary schools in Macedonia, giving students an opportunity to gain experience with this necessary modern technology. As a result of these innovations, Macedonian teachers were awarded with the European Grand Prix for innovation in computer-assisted learning, at Microsoft's Innovative Education Forum in 2011. Much work remains to be done, however, especially in the ethnic integration of schools, improving youth employability, and education issues in the Roma community. Another project of note is the USAID Equal Access for Equal Opportunities, which provides assistive technologies for over 20 primary scholars in Macedonia so their students with disabilities can develop cognitive and motor skills through the use of specially adapted IT peripherals or software, and have better access to education opportunities.

USAID has also been active sponsor of the Macedonia Connects program. This program has resulted in the provision of broadband internet connectivity to almost 550 elementary and secondary schools, research institutions, and universities, allowing Macedonia to become the first all-wireless internet country in the world. The outcome of this has been lower cost internet for Macedonians, increased internet penetration, and an increased integration of the ICT sector in Macedonia. In 2005, as a result of USAID, Macedonia became the first fully wireless, or wi-fi, connected country in the world.

Funding from projects has also been used to improve the status of women and minorities in Macedonia. Due to USAID programs, women have seen their opportunities to succeed increase dramatically. From business reforms to the introduction of micro-financing, new doors have been opened to close both gender and ethnicity divides. Projects in the areas of economic growth, democracy and local government, education and anti-trafficking reforms have all seen the condition of minorities and women improve greatly. Macedonia is currently ranked tier 1 by the State Department's Human Trafficking Report. More needs to be done in regards to participation of women in local government, especially at the mayoral level.

In order for development to continue, business development is a necessary precursor. Business development had long been hindered in Macedonia due to the presence of the Yugoslav command economy, and the three-year long Greek economic embargo in the 90s, which caused unemployment to skyrocket to 70 percent. Numerous projects are ongoing in this area, and successes of past projects can be seen in Macedonia's growing economy and decreasing unemployment rates to about 27% at the moment. Currently, USAID projects are improving competitiveness, creating investment development, introducing agribusiness technology, enhancing microfinance development, and eliminating barriers to start businesses. These projects are vital to ensuring the future of Macedonia's development. For instance, due to funding from USAID projects, a profitable scrap recycling industry has developed in Macedonia, a tool company has used financing projects to expand its market share, and food safety standards have been improved across the board.

Macedonia has been recognized by the World Bank, and the European Union has an economic reformer, and according to the Heritage Foundation/Wall Street Journal 2014 Index of Economic Freedom, Macedonia's economic freedom score is 68.6, making its economy the 43rd freest in the 2014 Index and is ranked 20th out of 43 countries in the Europe region, and its overall score is above the world and regional averages.

One of the biggest drivers of economic growth in Southeastern Europe has been tourism. Here too, aid money is of great importance. Aid allows for the improvement of domestic infrastructure networks, as well as the improvement of existing structures. Aid money has proved vital in the improvement of roads, as well as the modernization of Skopje's international airport. In addition to these improvements, aid money can be used to foster key sectors of the tourism market. For example, Macedonia is known for its bountiful harvests and venerable wine-making industry. Aid money has been vital in allowing this sector of the tourism and food industry to flourish. Another example, the Bovin Winery has been able to expand its oak-aging facilities and modernize the technology it uses to increase production. In 2005, USAID helped to establish Macedonia's first National Tourism Portal, <http://www.exploringmacedonia.com>.

Improving rule of law and the judicial system is another necessary precondition for continued growth. USAID has funded projects implementing judicial reform, strengthening civil society, and modernizing the Macedonian judicial system, while ensuring implementation of program to allow for citizenship for Macedonia's Roma population. However, work remains in the areas of improving the functioning of the judicial branch, increasing transparency, fighting corruption, and improving the functioning of Parliament. Until these reforms are enacted, the progress that Macedonia has made will be incomplete.

As one of its first Parliamentary actions, Macedonia confirmed its desire to attain NATO membership. Macedonia has worked hard to complete the domestic reforms necessary for membership, and has demonstrated its firm commitment to the Alliance. Macedonia has hosted the logistics support center for the KFOR mission in Kosovo, and has provided the fifth most troops per capita to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. This would not have been possible without the continued assistance of the United States. Aid money has driven military reforms forward, and partnership with the Vermont National Guard has allowed the Macedonian Army to be better-trained and better-equipped on the battlefield. In 2010, Macedonian troops were embedded within a Vermont National Guard deployment to Afghanistan – the first such joint deployment between the U.S. and a non-NATO member country in the history of the U.S. military. Military reforms have been impressive, and Macedonia's 7,000 strong Army has received praise from numerous United States military commanders. The importance of aid in this process should not be underestimated. Without contributions from the United States, Macedonia would still be lagging. As it is, Macedonia has completed all requirements for membership, and we hope the country will be invited to join the Alliance at the upcoming UK Summit in September, especially in light of the current situation in Ukraine. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) in December 2011 in its final judgment, without possibility for appeal, and binding on the parties, found that Greece, by objecting to the admission of Macedonia to NATO during the 2008 Bucharest Summit, has breached its obligation under Article 11, of the United Nations Interim Accord of September 13, 1995.

As has been evidenced by these success stories, aid has been a vital part of Macedonia's development and growth. Macedonia has promoted stability in the region, and worked diligently in spreading security in the world. Macedonia has been a staunch ally of the United States, and it is time for the United States to remember the contributions of its allies. It is only with restored aid, that Macedonia will continue its progress, and transition to a stage of innovation-led growth. Thanks to the support of the U.S., Macedonia has become a beacon of democracy in Southeast Europe, a role model for the region, and we believe further U.S. support will help U.S. interests in Southeast Europe. This will ensure a Europe, whole, free, and at peace, and very importantly political and socio-economic stability for Macedonia and Southeast Europe.

Funding for Voice of America

The FY 2015 proposed budget would eliminate the Macedonian language service of the Voice of America, together with the Albanian, Bosnian, and Serbian languages services, which amount to a total of \$2.4 million, while providing approximately \$2.4 increased budget to the Voice of America's director's office. This type of action would send a misleading message to these

countries by giving the impression that ties are being cut and ending an important arm of communication. Essentially, we believe this decision will hold a negative impact on the relationships between these countries and the United States.

In Macedonia, 98% of its inhabitants use television as their top media provider on a weekly basis. Of this group, the VoA program reaches 28.2% of the population, while Radio Free Europe reaches only 4.6% exemplifying the influence that the United States holds over the region in comparison to Europe. If the United States cuts this program now, its influence will surely decline in an age where American soft power is already experiencing a severe decline.

It is important to remember the significance that these countries hold towards U.S. interests within the region, and to keep in mind the severity of the impact of cutting Voice of America programs could have on the views and opinions of these countries' populations. The United States has positioned itself as a country that concerns itself with the interests and safety of other states. As you know, these countries have played an important role in supporting U.S. interests within the Balkan region time and again. Macedonia alone has assisted the United States in key missions including in Kosovo, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and with ISAF, Afghanistan. It has also worked tirelessly to promote the ideals of democracy to its neighboring countries and expand the sphere of influence the U.S. has within the area; therefore, it needs to maintain a strong and connected image to the rest of the world, through public diplomacy tools such as Voice of America. These actions directly violate this mission, and spread a hypocritical view of the U.S. While Voice of America is decreasing its presence, Al Jazeera, Russia Today, and other foreign media outlets are filling the void.

We implore you to reconsider withdrawing these Voice of America programs, in order to protect U.S. interests and relations with these countries. Taking two steps back to move one-step forward only cause the U.S. to distance itself from the soft power role, which has been nourished by the reciprocated positive public opinion in these countries. Once this power has been starved it can no longer be rejuvenated, so please keep these factors in consideration.

The United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD) is a leading international non-governmental organization promoting the interest and needs of Macedonian communities in the United States and throughout the world. On behalf of the close to half a million Americans of Macedonian heritage, we work to foster unity, promote Macedonian culture and heritage, advance the interests of the Macedonian-American communities, and strengthen the U.S.-Macedonia bilateral relationship.

Thank you for the opportunity you have provided the United Macedonian Diaspora to submit this testimony.

Testimony of the Wildlife Conservation Society
Submitted to House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and
Related Agencies
April 4, 2014

Contact: Kelly Keenan Aylward, WCS Washington Office Director kaylward@wcs.org (202) 624-8195

Chairwoman Granger, Ranking Member Lowey, Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on the FY2015 State, Foreign Operations, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act regarding Biodiversity, Wildlife Poaching & Trafficking, Energy and Global Health Accounts. The Bronx Zoo-based Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) was founded with the help of Theodore Roosevelt in 1895 with the mission of saving wildlife and wild places. Globally, WCS works to protect 25 percent of the world's biodiversity in more than 60 countries around the world. WCS manages more than 200 million acres of protected lands around the world, employing more than 4,000 staff including 200 Ph.D. scientists and 100 veterinarians. The largest threats facing conservationists today are wildlife poaching and resource exploitation; climate change; zoonotic diseases; and sustaining the world's natural capital to support human livelihoods.

US government investments in international conservation promote U.S. national and economic security objectives in foreign policy. As an implementing partner of the U.S. government overseas, WCS is closely involved with a myriad of development activities that promote the natural capital that sustains our societies, our economies and the planet's ecological systems. At the same time, natural resource scarcity and biodiversity loss are rising at unprecedented rates. Destruction of natural resources has been linked to large scale criminal activity and terrorist threats that undermine the rule of law and rob developing countries of economic opportunities. Our future well-being depends upon making the world increasingly stable, secure and safe.

As the Subcommittee balances the nation's fiscal challenges with national security and economic interests, it is important to note that international conservation comprises less than 1% of U.S. foreign assistance, which, in turn, is less than 1% of the federal budget. This modest investment in sustainable natural resource management in places like Afghanistan, Burma, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Guatemala and elsewhere reduces conflict around scarce resources and promotes law enforcement and rule of law, potentially avoiding costly future military interventions. This testimony will focus on programs at the U.S. State Department, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and the U.S. Department of Treasury's contributions to the Global Environment Facility – as well as the need to increase intelligence sharing among these agencies and others like the Department of Defense, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of the Interior, to combat terrorist and criminal syndicates engaged in wildlife trafficking.

USAID Biodiversity: Most U.S. foreign assistance for on-the-ground conservation is delivered through USAID and its robust portfolio of conservation and forestry programs. These help protect some of the largest and most at-risk natural landscapes and the livelihoods of millions of people who directly depend on natural resources for their survival and economic growth. The largest global conservation initiative is the Sustainable Conservation Approaches in Priority Ecosystems (SCAPES) which supports conservation efforts in 17 countries, from the forest slopes of the Andes Mountains to the savannas and steppes of Africa and Asia. Local capacity for biodiversity

conservation is strengthened through SCAPES transboundary field activities and a robust learning agenda. Technology also holds great promise for targeting law enforcement and ranger activities to those locations with the greatest threats of illegal activities. The Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool, or SMART, is a user-friendly software tool used to plan, implement, monitor and adaptively manage ranger-based law enforcement patrols.

Indigenous territorial management in Northern Bolivia through the **Initiative for Conservation in the Andean Amazon (ICAA)** has reduced deforestation along roads four-fold in comparison to neighboring areas. This reduction has been achieved through the development of consensus around land use; implementation of forest management projects including handicrafts, ecotourism, forestry and agro forestry initiatives; development of internal natural resource use regulations; and implementation of a territorial control strategy based on physical delimitation of vulnerable perimeters and community control. This reduction in deforestation represents 1,400 hectares per year and five million total CO₂-equivalent between 2008 and 2015.

In Central Africa, despite a long history of conflict, the **Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE)** brings 6 nations and many US government agencies together to save Africa's gorillas and forest elephants and to promote rational land-use planning and sustainable development which in turn decreases forest destruction and degradation. CARPE is the primary vehicle for US government investment in the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, an international initiative with more than 40 governmental and non-governmental partners. By establishing use-rights through multi-stakeholder land use plans, the program helps to mitigate conflict over local resources. In a region where nearly half of the forests are under concession to timber companies, protected areas have grown by more than 12.5 million additional acres.

The President's FY15 Budget Request does not include a line item for the USAID Biodiversity Program or any of the subaccounts within the Biodiversity Program like CARPE, ICAA, Maya Biosphere Reserve, US Forest Service, or the Lacey Act. WCS recommends that the USAID Biodiversity line item be restored and funded at \$212.5 million (the FY14 Enacted level) of which at least \$31 million for CARPE, \$20 million for the Andean Amazon Conservation Initiative, \$1 million for Guatemala's Maya Biosphere Reserve, \$2 million to implement and enforce the Lacey Act (section 8204 of Public Law 110-246), \$1 million to Dept of Justice Environment and Natural Resources Department to conduct additional wildlife trafficking workshops overseas, and \$4 million to the US Forest Service pursuant to the Foreign Assistance Act Sec. 632(a).

Combating Wildlife Poaching and Trafficking: The illegal trade in endangered wildlife products, including elephant ivory, rhino horns, and turtle shells, is worth at least an estimated \$7 to \$10 billion annually according to US government estimates compiled by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). When the trade in illegal logging, plants and fisheries are also included, CRS offers that estimates exceed \$100 billion, which would place the illegal wildlife trade among the 10 largest criminal activities worldwide. Because of the lucrative nature of this industry, evidence is showing increasingly that transnational criminal organizations and terrorist groups that are involved in other major trafficking operations—drugs, humans and weapons—are engaged in wildlife trafficking as well.

On the ground in Africa and elsewhere, WCS scientists are seeing, first-hand, the devastating impact poaching is having on elephants, rhinos, tigers, and other iconic species. The catastrophic loss of elephants in Chad and Cameroon at the hands of heavily armed North Sudanese and Chadian horseman, and other recent alarming declines in elephants in areas across Central Africa, reinforces

the need for effective wildlife law enforcement in Central Africa to deter and respond to the national security risks posed by trafficking networks not only in ivory and rhino horn, but potentially also linked to other forms of organized crime. In 2012 alone, WCS estimates that 35,000 African elephants were poached for their ivory—that is an average of 96 elephants per day or one poached every 15 minutes. The subspecies of African forest elephants has seen a 65 percent decline since 2002, dwindling to less than 80,000 today. Continued poaching at these rates may mean the extinction of forest elephants within a decade. WCS has launched a public awareness campaign 96Elephants.org that has generated 225,000 emails to elected officials in the U.S. in support of the US ban on commercial ivory, rhino horn and other endangered species.

The Federal government recently announced the National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking (National Strategy), which is designed to provide a framework for a whole-of-government approach to addressing wildlife trafficking. The FY14 Consolidated Appropriations Act includes for the first time not less than \$45 million to combat Wildlife Poaching and Trafficking. However, the FY15 Administration request did not include a line item for Wildlife Poaching & Trafficking programs at the U.S. State Department and USAID. Reps. Meng and Grimm have spearheaded a letter to Appropriators with 30 Members requesting not less than \$45 million to promote field based protection of wildlife, strengthen law enforcement, disrupt trafficking networks, shutdown criminal syndicates and terrorist groups, address corruption and reduce demand for endangered species parts and products. WCS recommends that at least \$45 million be congressionally directed to the U.S. State Department International Narcotics Control & Law Enforcement, U.S. State Department Office of Environment and Science (OES) and USAID to implement programs to stop Wildlife Poaching and Trafficking. Report language is requested to direct that funding to the INCLE, OES and USAID to address wildlife poaching and trafficking remain separate and distinct from the existing anti-trafficking programs currently being implemented by USAID with Biodiversity Program funding.

The National Strategy calls for the Federal government to “increase coordination among law enforcement and intelligence agencies to enhance the effectiveness of Federal efforts to combat wildlife trafficking.” This increased coordination with the intelligence community, U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. State Department, USAID, and USFWS is essential to stopping the poaching, closing the trafficking networks and reducing demand. WCS urges the Committee to include report language that would facilitate increased coordination between the myriad of federal agencies and partners with access and need for intelligence to combat wildlife poaching and trafficking.

The Global Environment Facility (the GEF): The US is one of more than 30 donors to the GEF where about 1/3 of all funds are directed to biodiversity conservation in the developing world. WCS is a partner of the GEF in Burma to develop the country’s natural resource management strategy. The first of its kind nation-wide assessment of biodiversity and its threats will contribute significantly to donor priorities around sustainable development of natural resources and land use planning. There is also indication that the GEF will develop a new stream of financing to combat wildlife trafficking. WCS requests that the U.S. Treasury Department transfers the U.S. contribution to the GEF at the amount consistent with its pledge to the GEF-6 Replenishment and pay down its arrears to the extent possible in FY15. The Administration has included a placeholder of \$136.5 million in the FY15 request and the FY14 enacted level was \$143.8 million.

Sustainable Landscapes: Forests are essential for regulating water flow, capturing rainfall for drinking water and often preventing catastrophic flooding and soil erosion. Forests supply direct

food, economic resources and medicinal products to the over 1.6 billion people who live in them, and are vital to the healthy ecosystems we all depend on. Sustainable Landscapes support for reducing deforestation through sustainable management practices helps to protect these essential storehouses of biodiversity and carbon, as well as the essential goods and services that they provided people around the globe, including the United States. U.S. support will give developing countries the ability to address the drivers of deforestation and degradation, halt illegal logging and restore degraded lands. This has direct economic benefits for U.S. producers as well: unfair competition from illegally harvested timber in developing countries costs the U.S. timber industry \$1 billion annually. WCS requests funding to USAID and State Department for Sustainable Landscapes at \$123.5 million, level with FY14 Enacted levels. It remains important that funding for Sustainable Landscapes be separate and additional to USAID Biodiversity funding as was written in the FY14 Consolidated Appropriations Act.

Resiliency and Adaptation: Some of the world's poorest countries are experiencing increased droughts, floods, cyclones, tsunamis and other extreme weather events. These regions need technical and financial assistance to monitor changes and integrate nature-based adaptation strategies into plans that address infrastructure, health, agriculture, natural resources management, disaster risk reduction and conflict mitigation. Adaptation programs seek to link climate resilience efforts between all development sectors, including agriculture, natural resources management, health, energy and infrastructure, using decision support tools. As part of ongoing efforts to protect ecosystems and improve the livelihoods of the people living in Africa's Albertine Rift, WCS has helped the Uganda National Forest Authority to determine the economic value and services the forests provide for the surrounding communities. WCS recommends \$186.9 million for adaptation assistance, level with FY15 enacted levels. WCS also recommends that USAID integrate climate change and natural resource management into the Feed the Future program that has the potential, if structured properly, to provide sustainable supply chains, build climate resilient communities and reduce emissions.

USAID Emerging Pandemic Threats (EPT) Program: These investments fight the emergence of zoonotic diseases that spread between people and animals by building essential human and institutional capacity to prevent disease transmission at its source, and controlling its spread locally and across borders regionally and globally. Since 2009, the PIOET/EPT Program has collected samples from over 35,000 wild animals at high risk interfaces and discovered over 200 new potentially zoonotic viruses from wild animals in countries where the risk of disease emergence is high. The governments of Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Bangladesh, and Bolivia were assisted by USAID EPT-funded partners in responding to disease outbreaks. The program has built viral family diagnostic capacity in 33 countries; and more than 1,500 human, animal, and environment health professionals from 20 countries have been trained in the prevention, timely detection, confirmation, preparedness and response to zoonotic diseases outbreaks. Sustaining these investments is essential for US national security and public health interests. In FY14, the Pandemic Influenza and Other Emerging Threats (PIOET) Office, in USAID's Global Health Bureau was funded at \$72.5 million. The Administration FY15 request of \$50 million is well below the enacted level. WCS requests that PIOET be fully funded at \$72.5 million in FY15, which will enable current levels of effort to continue to protect vital global interests.

In conclusion, WCS appreciates the opportunity to share its perspectives and recommend modest funding for international conservation in the FY15 SFOPs Appropriations Act. Conservation

investments are in our national and economic security interest and assist in building capacity, strengthening governance and stabilizing regions prone to conflict and unrest.

Public Written Testimony on Fiscal Year 2015 Appropriations

Submitted to the Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Witness Name: Richard Leach, President, World Food Program USA

Subject matter of testimony: FY15 International Disaster Assistance Appropriations

The World Food Program USA, on behalf of the world's hungriest people, urges the subcommittee to provide the strongest possible funding to U.S. international humanitarian and food security assistance programs within the jurisdiction of the subcommittee. Specifically, we request \$2.1 billion for the International Disaster Assistance account, managed by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), inclusive of the portion of IDA that the subcommittee may choose to support as part of Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding.

There are 842 million hungry people in the world. Global hunger threatens U.S. economic and national security interests. United States international food security and nutrition programs funded by accounts within the jurisdiction of this subcommittee are vital to preserving U.S. leadership and encouraging other countries to contribute their fair share in the fight against global hunger. World Food Program USA joins over 180 fellow members of InterAction, the United States' largest coalition of international development and humanitarian non-governmental organizations, in calling for robust funding for these accounts, including International Disaster Assistance (IDA), the nutrition portion of the Global Health account, and the Feed the Future agriculture development component of the development assistance account.

Need for U.S. International Humanitarian Assistance Has Never Been Greater

Strong funding for International Disaster Assistance (IDA) is particularly critical in meeting emergency food and other humanitarian needs at a time when those needs are projected to be at a record high. The ongoing conflict in Syria accounts for much of this unprecedented need. The scale of the Syria crisis continues to increase exponentially. Nine million Syrians, approaching half of the country's pre-war population, have fled their homes. Six and a half million people are internally displaced and nearly 2.5 million have sought refuge in neighboring countries. The suffering of Syrian civilians is alarming and overwhelming, with women and children disproportionately vulnerable to the violence and the effects of the war. The UN projects three quarters of the Syrian population—around 16.8 million people—will require assistance by the end of 2014. The UN humanitarian appeal for Syria in 2014 is \$6.5 billion and, unless there is peace in Syria, is likely to remain at a similar or higher level in 2015.

Major humanitarian need will also likely persist across Sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Southwest Asia. IDA funding is essential for the U.S. to respond to the needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs), such as in Sudan (2.9 million IDPs), South Sudan (716,000), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2.7 million), and Central African Republic (698,000), Haiti (360,000), Mali (350,000), and the Philippines (115,000).

In early 2014, South Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR) witnessed sectarian violence that led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of families. Refugee camps and shelters struggled to feed the influx of men, women and children. Unfortunately, these tensions are not expected to dissipate quickly, and will likely take consistent humanitarian support over the coming years.

IDA also funds critical disaster-risk reduction (DRR) programs to strengthen community resilience and help reduce risk and vulnerability so communities can prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters. For example, DRR activities help save lives and protect livelihoods by improving early warning systems and minimizing exposure to earthquakes and floods.

IDA Is Critical to Responding to International Emergency Food Aid Needs

IDA funds a major part of the United States response to international emergency food needs. Between 30 to 40 percent of IDA's annual expenditures support the Emergency Food Security Program (EFSP). Managed by the Office of Food for Peace, EFSP provides cash-based emergency food assistance through voucher programs, local and regional purchasing of food, and related cash-based emergency assistance efforts that enable rapid delivery of assistance.

EFSP provides the bulk of U.S. food assistance funding to Syrian conflict victims, displaced persons, and refugees. The UN World Food Programme (WFP) expects approximately \$2 billion—about one-third of its annual emergency food assistance budget—will be required to provide food aid to Syrians throughout the region over the next year. The use of EFSP cash funding supports innovative food voucher systems for Syrian refugees that supports local markets and provides refugees receiving food assistance with greater dietary diversity.

EFSP is also currently the primary source of U.S. government funding for local and regional purchase (LRP) of international food assistance. Rigorous analysis of U.S. government LRP projects has shown that, compared with traditional U.S. food aid shipments, LRP practices typically enable assistance to be delivered more quickly, at considerable savings, with the ultimate benefit of reaching larger numbers of vulnerable people. LRP also generates important developmental impacts by spurring local economic activity and helping form and strengthen local markets.

Congressional Leadership is Essential to Ensuring Adequate Funding for IDA

Congress has recognized the critical importance of strong funding for the International Disaster Assistance Account (IDA), providing it with \$1.8 billion in FY14. Despite the continued expansion of humanitarian need, the President's FY15 budget proposal requests less money for IDA than Congress provided in the FY14 Omnibus Appropriations bill. This request falls far short of what is required to meet the share of global humanitarian food needs the U.S. has historically supported.

For example, funding the traditional U.S. share of thirty percent of the UN World Food Programme's emergency food assistance needs would, for the Syria crisis alone, require \$600 million in U.S. funding in FY15. The President's budget, however, requests only half of that amount (\$300 million) for food assistance in Syria in its Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) IDA proposal.

In the recent past, the President has requested up to \$300 million out of the regular IDA budget (excluding OCO) for emergency food assistance. This year's request for regular IDA going to food assistance is only \$166 million, clearly inadequate to meet the requirements for this account in the rest of the world excluding Syria.

This is why the World Food Program USA and over 180 non-government organizations (NGOs) request Congress to fund the International Disaster Assistance Account (IDA) at a level of \$2.1 billion in FY15. This is the level needed to allow adequate funding of the Emergency Food Security Program at up to 40 percent of total IDA, without that food assistance coming at the expense of other vital non-food lifesaving assistance following natural and man-made disasters that is funded by IDA. This \$2.1 billion could be provided through a combination of regular IDA and OCO funding as needed to reflect Congressional budget limitations.

The world's hungry and vulnerable women, children, and men suffering from war and natural disasters need the support of the American people to survive. Robust funding of the FY15 International Disaster Assistance account is essential in providing that needed support.

*Vanessa Dick
Senior Policy Officer
World Wildlife Fund*

**TESTIMONY of WORLD WILDLIFE FUND on
The Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Request
FOR THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE AND FOREIGN OPERATIONS
April 4, 2014**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on fiscal year 2015 (FY15) State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs investments. WWF is the world's largest private conservation organization working internationally to conserve wildlife and nature. WWF currently sponsors conservation programs in more than 100 countries with the support of 1.2 million members in the United States and more than 5 million members worldwide. WWF combines a unique approach of integrating global reach with a scientific foundation, thereby promoting innovative solutions that meet the needs of both people and nature. WWF urges the Committee to continue its tradition of support to international conservation and climate change programs by supporting the following accounts:

- \$2.6 billion for the Development Assistance Account for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), including continuing in FY15 a directive for biodiversity (\$212.5 million);
- \$143.75 million for the Global Environment Facility (GEF),
- \$45 million for wildlife trafficking, and,
- \$840 million for accounts within the Global Climate Change Initiative (GCCCI)

While WWF understands the current fiscal environment demands sacrifices, we urge the Committee to consider the tremendous returns these modest investments have in advancing U.S. leadership on global challenges.

Illegal Natural Resource Trade

Illegal trade in natural resource commodities, such as timber and fish, is one of the most pressing conservation challenges. These illegal markets have significant economic impacts that

depress global prices, and make it more difficult for law-abiding companies to compete. Illegal and unreported fish catch represents \$10 to \$23.5 billion annually and illegal timber trade costs U.S. businesses an estimated \$1 billion each year. By combating these markets, U.S. conservation programs help to level the playing field for American businesses and build strong economic partners in the developing world for our own future prosperity.

In 2008, Congress expanded protections in the Lacey Act to include a prohibition on the trade of illegal plant and plant products. These amendments are having a significant impact, with some studies showing worldwide illegal logging on the decline as much as 25%. Nonetheless, criminal networks responsible for much of the \$30-\$100 billion illegal global trade in timber and forest products are becoming increasingly sophisticated, demonstrating the continued need for effective implementation of the Lacey Act amendments. Currently, the \$212.5 million biodiversity directive in the Development Assistance Account recommends \$2 million to help State and USAID with Lacey implementation. WWF supports that recommendation in FY15, as USAID and the State Department play a critical role in explaining the implications of the expanded Lacey Act to foreign countries, and supporting the development of technologies that assist enforcement agents to identify timber species.

In addition to the illegal timber and fish trade, U.S. support is especially important to curbing illegal trade in rare and threatened wildlife, as some of our most iconic species are being pushed towards extinction. Worth \$8-10 billion annually, this trade threatens efforts to protect species and reduce biodiversity loss while undermining sustainable livelihoods and weakening the rule of law. Wildlife trafficking is a lucrative source of criminal financing in Africa and Asia, encouraging corruption, instability, and violence. In FY14 Congress supported action on illegal wildlife trafficking, including the Administration's National Strategy on Combatting Wildlife

Trafficking, with a \$45 million directive that includes \$15 million for State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement, and \$30 million in bilateral economic assistance, such as USAID's Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE). WWF supports a continuation of this \$45 million directive into FY15.

Climate Change

Climate change poses a threat of enormous scope and magnitude to the global economy and environment. As greenhouse gas emissions increase, unpredictable weather patterns, rising temperatures, and food and water insecurity are likely to accelerate. Additionally, the impact of climate change threatens the progress we have made in development and poverty reduction worldwide. In FY15 the President has requested \$850 million for the Global Climate Change Initiative (GCCCI), an interagency U.S. government initiative that mobilizes the full range of foreign assistance mechanisms – bilateral, multilateral and private – to invest strategically in building lasting resilience to unavoidable climate impacts; reduce emissions from deforestation and land degradation; and, support low-carbon development strategies and the transition to a sustainable, clean energy economy. WWF supports the President's Request. In addition, we urge your support of the Green Climate Fund, the fledgling international fund intended to foster global cooperation and build the capabilities of vulnerable developing countries for low-carbon, climate-resilient development.

Biodiversity

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is an international financial institution that unites 183 countries with U.S. corporations and NGOs to provide grants for environmental projects that also support sustainable economic growth. The U.S. is a key contributor to the GEF and leads many projects that support U.S. economic and security interests. For every dollar invested in the

GEF, \$52 is raised from other public and private partners. GEF support has been critical to placing 12% of the world's terrestrial area under protection, resulting in 2,809 protected areas spanning 1.7 billion acres containing as least 700 globally threatened species. WWF asks that that the GEF be funded at the FY14 level of \$143.75 million.

USAID Biodiversity is funded through a line-item in the Development Assistance Account. These programs protect some of the largest and most-at risk natural landscapes by empowering developing countries to tackle drivers of biodiversity loss and resource degradation, such as the illegal extraction of natural resources, overfishing, pollution, poor agricultural practices, weak governance and illegal wildlife trafficking. USAID is able to strengthen the capacity of countries to manage their natural resources, thereby supporting sustainable economic development. These programs also promote the competitiveness of U.S. businesses by ensuring sustainable supply chains and preventing illegal products from flooding and undermining markets. WWF asks that USAID's Biodiversity Conservation Program receive \$212.5 million in FY15.

WITNESSES

	Page
Albright, Alice	81
Altman, D. C	109
Ardouny, Bryan	50
Arnold, D. D	59
Aylward, K. K	166
Baguirov, Adil	159
Beckmann, Rev. David	2
Bilimoria, N. F	69
Blumhorst, Glenn	120
Bourgault, Jeanne	105
Buda, J. A	84
Christenson, Kaitlin	76
Collins, J. F	134
Davidson, Dr. D. E	17
Dick, Vanessa	174
Fawcett, John	138
Finn, Patricia	46
Heavican, Michael	116
Hotez, Dr. Peter	147
Hourihan, Jenny	130
Incitti, Lance	73
Kaplan, R. N	93
Klosson, Michael	97
Kohr, H. A	37
Koloski, M. A	162
Kouzounis, Anthony	27
Lacy, James	143
Larigakis, Nick	32
Lawrence, Dr. L. R., Jr	64
Leach, Richard	171
Levinson, Ellen	24
Lord, Kristin	150
Madden, W. A	112
McGlynn, M. G	102
McGriffin, Adam	112
Nahapetian, Kate	55
Onley, Kameron	125
Scott, G. D., III	42
Shakhbandarov, Islom	20
Sheldrick, Michael	126
Stern, C. M	155
Woo, Dr. C. Y	7
Yeo, Peter	12